

2013 Rules Committee Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2013 – Waller, Texas

Attendees:

Members	Guests
Andy Blackburn (9B)	John Good (X) - Volunteer
John Cochrane (BB)	Richard Maleady – SSA Chair (TO)
John Godfrey (QT)	
Mike Smith (XM)	
Ken Sorenson (KM)	

1 – 2014 Assignments

Chair	QT
Secretary	9B
Rules Writer	X
Rules Editor	QT
Rules Change Summary	QT
Opinion Poll Writer	BB
Opinion Poll Publisher	Aland Adams / BB / QT
Ranking List	John Leibacher
Winscore Liaison	X
SSA Website Liaison	9B

2 – 2014 Schedule

Date	Item	Who
Nov 24	Meeting Minutes to committee	9B / KM
Dec 1	Draft rule changes to committee	X
Dec 8	Rules Change Summary to committee	QT
Dec 15	Committee responses back to Chair	ALL
Dec 22	Publish minutes and rules change summary on SSA website	QT
Jan 5	Comment period closes	Pilots
Jan 11	Final rules changes to SSA for BOD /Excom	QT / KM
Jan 20	Rules published on SSA website	QT
May, July	RC election announcement	KM
8/21	2012 pilot poll questions to writer	Committee
9/6	Draft poll to committee	BB
9/20	Poll to Aland for publication	BB
10/1-10/19	Poll and Election	QT
Nov	RC Meeting	QT

QT framed the goals for the meeting by referencing pilot feedback that shows a strong and consistent preference for rules simplification and for minimizing the number of rules changes – particularly those that affect how tasks are flown. Significant changes in this area for the 2014 should be kept to a minimum. Where appropriate, areas of the rules in need of change should be deferred to a more comprehensive simplification of the rules at a future date. RC agreed to try to resist urges to micro-adjust the rules.

3 - Infrastructure and Organizer Feedback (QT)

3.1 Best start automation

Leo Buckley and QT had a chat with Guy Byars at New Castle. Guy will be taking a look at the selection of best start as proposed by X. After discussion it appears to be possible to cover the vast majority of start scenarios, if not 100%.

Action – X to monitor progress with Guy Byars

3.2 Remote scoring infrastructure

Also a result of the above conversation, QT has been working with Guy Byars and Doug Easton on developing automated/remote scoring so that contests would not need local scorers. Easton and Byars expressed willingness to work on this. This requires both Winscore and SSA website changes (e.g. to automate the collection and processing of flight logs).

Action X and 9B to follow up with Guy Byars and Doug Easton respectively

3.3 Online entry / contest management / registration / reporting wish list

3.3.1 Request to require organizers verify aircraft registration (Ridenour) – Pilots already certify that all aircraft documents are valid. This should remain pilot responsibility

Decision: No action

3.3.2 Flarm rental request on application – It is likely too complex to automate the request process, but it should be possible to place a link/reminder on the registration page that would take the pilot to the relevant web page for the rental program.

Action – 9B to discuss solution with Doug Easton

3.3.3 Fillable organizer forms for contest summary. BB – If we are going to enable a fillable form we should require that organizers either fill out a summary of any significant accidents/incidents or check a box that none occurred. We are getting

very little information on incidents and in some cases details/logs are omitted.

Action – QT to evaluate feasibility

3.3.4 PRL Methodology – Discussion of current and alternative methodologies for calculating PRL scores for pilot rankings. The current method of declaring 92 points for FAI regional versus 100 points for Nationals undervalues highly competitive regional contests (e.g. Perry and Seniors) while potentially over-valuing sparsely attended Nationals. The only current use of PRL scores is for Preferential Entry, which occurs infrequently, and for pilot self-assessment or bragging rights. BB and 9B discussed alternate forms of team selection criteria with 2T – for now no change is contemplated. However, with new contest formats emerging (e.g. mixed FAI Nationals and Super-Regionals) and gaining large, competitive fields of pilots, and the further evolution of FAI Class participation, it is possible that more than single-class nationals performance might figure into world team selection. This could increase the relevance of a PRL measure in gauging the relative performance of pilots for the purpose of team selection.

Action – 9B and BB to evaluate a sliding scale for valuing contests for PRL purposes based on some combination of depth and breadth of competition. KM to query team selection committee on potential evolution of team selection criteria as contest formats change (including US Team training camps).

4 - Participation

Participation Report (KM)

Pilots attending a contest increased by 84 overall in 2013 vs. 2012, 78 of which came in Regional contests.

After reviewing the pilot poll and looking at the participation data, KM raised a question about what form of participation the RC should be focused on. Specifically, should the RC de-emphasize its focus on growing Nationals participation in favor of focusing predominantly on growing Regionals participation. There is a pilot preference among Nationals participants for class purity over size of competitive field, but the sentiment at the regional level is the opposite, a preference for larger competitor fields with mixed, handicapped classes. Emphasizing participation at Regionals would leave the Nationals for the dedicated few who either prefer class purity and/or are vying for team spots and are willing to travel longer distances to achieve it. There was some discussion about what depth (PRL ranking) and breadth (number of entrants) of competition is needed to ensure a quality result at Nationals.

Changing the basic structure of the Nationals (adding FAI-combined or going to E/W

Nats) will be difficult and causes other problems such as what to do about trophies and meshing with historical winners. Trend is that the “bottom half” of the scoresheet at the old large-scale Nationals isn’t going to Nationals any more. The speculation is that they are flying Regionals or OLC. Trend seems to be that Nationals is more for the most serious of competitors/US Team contenders. Participation might be improved with better site selection, class pairing and E/W location.

Given the broad pilot preference for larger competitive fields there was extensive discussion about how to get there. Mixed FAI Regionals or Super Regionals are one approach, but also consideration of whether this would increase the overall draw of pilots. Increasing the maximum PRL points for these contests might potentially increase the attractiveness at the margin, but any increase ought to be accompanied by an increase in the depth and breadth of the competitive field. There was some discussion as to the effectiveness of PRL points as a way to attract pilots. There was also discussion of whether creating highly competitive contests outside the single-class Nationals structure, coupled with declining Nationals participation, ultimately might lead to a need to change how US Team selection works, which today is based solely on participation in class-specific Nationals.

Action – De-emphasize big-change efforts to increase participation in Nationals. Turn attention to developing more attractive contests in terms of size, competitive field, timing and geographic location regardless of Nationals status.

Tasking was discussed at length. Tasking is not explicitly a rules issue, but the RC can provide guidance to CDs on calling tasks. The RC concluded from the poll feedback that pilots would like more head-to-head racing (ideally in the form of Assigned Tasks) but not at the expense of significantly more landouts. As a practical matter this can be challenging for CDs on any given day, as the weather is not always predictable enough for a CD and task committee to be confident that both goals can be accommodated.

A head-to-head task that is promising is the Long MAT, but it needs to be well-structured. The Long MAT generally had very positive in-person responses from pilots who flew it (with one exception where weather was an issue late in the day). The poll was more neutral on long MAT, although the number of long MATs called was fairly limited. A long-MAT format with closer together turnpoints near the home airfield at the end of the task (potentially including the home airfield/finish) reduces the potential for faster pilots to face a “roll the dice” choice of extending the task into dying conditions towards the end of the day. It was agreed that the Long MAT needs greater exposure with pilots and specific guidance to CDs related to keeping the later legs short and closer to home.

Smaller circle TATs also are a step in the direction of increased head-to-head.

The RC encourages increased diversity in tasking. Smaller-circle (5-15 mi) TATs, Long MATs and ASTs should all be considered by CDs as a way to satisfy this pilot preference.

Each has particular advantages/disadvantages in terms of matching up with weather conditions and the makeup of the contest.

Action – X to add wording on tasking guidance to Appendix – both in terms of diversity of tasks and best practices on task structure.

5 - Safety Report (BB)

BB provided the RC with a summary of contest accidents/incidents (see separate document). Thankfully, there were no fatal accidents at contests in 2013, but there were a number of incidents. Details on several of the outlanding accidents were hard to obtain. There is a general issue with obtaining sufficient information from contests to assess safety. Contest organizers irregularly provide incident reports and flight logs from incidents are frequently not provided by pilots or omitted from posted flight logs for the day when the flight was scored.

Canadian contests are proposing to require pilots to sign a document giving the Soaring Association of Canada rights to collect and evaluate flight logs in the event of an accident. There was a discussion about the effectiveness and implications of adopting a similar policy in the US and what organization should pursue such an effort as it seemed to be within the charter of SSF.

Action – TO to speak to SSF about the potential to take on a regular and comprehensive review of outlandings and accidents/incidents at contests.

6 - Poll Review (QT)

A surprising 40% of the PRL responded to the poll. Much of this came after the re-send of the poll request following loss of some response data. There was discussion on the subtleties of how to gain attention and elevate response rates for the pilots' poll – email titles, sender, number of reminders, etc. Some learnings, but no major changes anticipated.

Key takeaways for the Rules Committee:

- IGC rules, both most and least important issue to address – pilots strongly split
- We should spend time on participation and nationals
- Don't fiddle with things
- Rules too complex and onerous
- Flarm generally positive, but shouldn't be mandatory
- P-P comms create concerns but the experiment should continue
- Regionals pilots want bigger competitive fields included mixed FAI handicapped, Nationals pilots lean more towards class purity over size of competitive field
- Desire for more head-to-head racing in task calling, but without significant increases in landouts

	Important (1 or 2)	Neutral (Chose 3)	Unimportant (4 or 5)	<blank>		Important (1 or 2)	Neutral (Chose 3)	Unimportant (4 or 5)	<blank>
Rules changes aimed at Increasing participation in contests	155	41	31	11		65%	17%	13%	5%
Rethinking nationals classes, east/west, handicapped classes, etc.	121	57	46	14		51%	24%	19%	6%
Improving / simplifying scoring formulas (e.g. day devaluation, speed versus distance points)	110	64	54	10		46%	27%	23%	4%
Moving towards IGC rules/providing a better training ground for worlds	102	41	79 (2)	16		43%	17%	33%	7%
Safety initiatives	95	79	51	13		40%	33%	21%	5%
Tasking guidance	90	78	56	14		38%	33%	24%	6%
Other Rules simplification	89	72	59 (4)	18		37%	30%	25%	8%
Finish procedures	88	67	69 (3)	14		37%	28%	29%	6%
Handicaps	71	98	56 (5)	13		30%	41%	24%	5%
Start procedures	47	63	112 (1)	16		20%	26%	47%	7%

7 Quick Items

7.1 Sports Class minimum distance should be handicapped, not raw (Fidler, X) [Rule 11.2.3.5]

Min distance should be handicapped for sports class. Dropped unintentionally.

Action – X to fix scoring formulas to handicap MinDist in Sports Class.

Separate, related topic. There was a request to provide tasking guidance so that achieving the minimum possible distance on a TAT would exceed minimum distance to qualify for speed points. There have been cases where pilots have nicked assigned turn areas but been short of distance requirement for speed points This may not always be possible to do and imposes workload on the CD. Also, forcing TATs to be structured such that complete flights less than min distance are impossible reduces task flexibility on weak days - the ability for pilots to make more distance in direction of flyable weather – which is a significant downside.

Decision – No change to the rules.

7.2 Require daily posting of all logs on SSA Website (Nico Bennett) [Rule 10.5.1.5 10.5.1.6]

Rules currently require that logs be made available to competitors. At some sites it may not be possible to post to Internet quickly – logs are made available locally only.

Action – X to add guidance to post flights on SSA website if possible. No change to rules.

7.3 FAI Regional rules describe handicapped classes, but no references to handicaps are in the scoring formulas (BB) [Rule 11.6]

Action – X to address with help from BB. This is not a change, just a review/fix to make sure the scoring formulas are doing what we intended.

7.4 Appendix guidance regarding enforcement of weight limits (Linda Murray) [A 6.8.2?]

There is nothing in the rules now that specifies how weight limits are to be enforced. There is some guidance in the appendix. Many Regional contests don't do any weighing. We don't want protests to surface midway through contest. If announced at the mandatory meeting, any procedural weighing issues can be resolved then. More fundamentally, should we eliminate weight-adjusted handicaps? Weighing is complex and onerous to organizers and pilots and generates lots of complex discussions about tenths of a percent in handicaps, which are not accurate to tenths of a percent in the first place. Related issue - should we drop, round to nearest, the last digit of the handicap?

Decision – No rules change for 2014. Consider in larger rules simplification project.

Action – X to amend guidance to say CD should describe at the mandatory meeting what method if any will be used to enforce weighing.

8 Complex Items

8.1 Classes

The current state of possible classes in a contest

Competition Class	"FAI" Classes Rules (Water)		Sports Class Rules (Dry)	
	National	Regional	National	Regional
FAI Open Class	Allowed	Allowed		
FAI 18M Class	Allowed	Allowed		
FAI 15M Class	Allowed	Allowed		
FAI Std Class	Allowed	Allowed		
FAI Club Class	Proposed 2015			Allowed
FAI 13.5M Class	Not Available	Allowed		
Doppelsitzer (Bus) Handicapped	Not contemplated	Allowed		
"Limited Handicap" (ala UH) Std	Waiver	Waiver		
"Limited Handicap" (ala UH) 15M	Not contemplated	Waiver		
"Limited Handicap" (ala UH) 18M	Not contemplated	Not contemplated		
Defined Handicap Range (water optional)	Not contemplated	Allowed		Allowed (no water)
Defined Skill Level Range (water optional)	Not contemplated	Allowed		Allowed (no water)
Defined other criteria (e.g. 2 seater "bus" class)	Not contemplated	Allowed		Allowed (no water)

Traditional Sports Class			Allowed	Allowed
Modern Sports			Allowed	
US Club			Allowed	Allowed

8.1.1 Have a Club Nationals in 2015 subject to Caesar Creek discussion and getting someone to bid at non-conflicting time/venue. Existing Club/Modern Nationals reverts to Sports (can't have 2 Club champs)

Decision – Starting 2015, have a separate club class nationals as a racing class, separate site and time from Sports Nationals, preferably on opposite end of the country. Gliders below club class performance can fly but get no more handicap than bottom of club. Tasking for Club, regardless of any lower performance gliders that enter. In 2015 Sports becomes modern/low performance.

The low performance “division” of the sports class will be identical to what is now the Club Class division in the Sports Class. It will need to be rebranded as “Sports – low-performance division”. We want to give another few years to trying the performance split within Sports. Split makes tasking more workable and handicapping more fair (eliminates the 1-26 and Nimbus in the same class). If this doesn’t become popular we can go back to the original single Sports Class. Option to make Sports/LP split organizer option beginning 2015. That would allow the organizer to adjust the contest format to accommodate the makeup of gliders that actually show up.

Decision – No changes for 2014 – announce 2015 change this year for comment. Review comments and make any final adjustments at 2014 RC meeting.

There was a long discussion of CD task guidance to target 1.0 handicap vs. "fair" for all gliders in Sports Class. (including a discussion of what "fair" means). An intelligent split of Sports into compatible handicap ranges helps tasking and alleviates the need to have very large turn areas, for instance. In addition, guidance should go to CDs that very large handicaps for low performance gliders contemplate the probability that they will land out more frequently and that “Fair opportunity to compete” is not equivalent to “fair opportunity to complete the task”. This can be addressed as part of the Sports/Club changes for 2015.

Decision – No change for 2014. Revisit for 2015.

8.1.2 Mixed FAI Contests – SuperRegionals/Nationals (BB)

The idea comes from a desire to address multiple challenges: 1) the participation issue (Section 4, above), 2) a growing desire among pilots to attend large, competitive contests without travelling long distances (and willingness to consider mixed-FAI classes to achieve the goal), 3) the viability of classes with low participation, including Nationals

and 4) implications for US Team selection if some Nationals become too small to be viewed as reliable indicators of pilot skill across the applicable pilot pool.

Large, competitive, mixed FAI contests could be attractive as an alternative to the current choice of travelling long distances to a Nationals or going to a thinly-attended Regionals in a particular class. The contests may not need to be Nationals, but may not attract a truly high-quality field without elevated status of some kind. Higher than Regional PRL points or potentially the opportunity to earn credit towards team selection (for certain pilots) may be required to drive breadth and depth of the competitive field. If we were to successfully encourage participation at large mixed-FAI class contests at the Regional level it could in part be at the expense of Nationals, but this effect would likely be small if the mixed-FAI contest were held on the opposite coast as the relevant class(es) for National competition and didn't overlap dates. A first step would be to encourage a large mixed-FAI Super-Regional contest, potentially with elevated PRL points, on the opposite coast from the Nationals.

Above considerations notwithstanding, Nationals siting needs to be more balanced and orchestrated longer in advance. Given the relatively small numbers of organizers stepping up this is not an easy problem, but should be solvable with effort. For many pilots a large competitive "opposite coast" contest may be preferred to a Nationals and should be part of the overall contest "Master Plan".

Given all west coast Nationals in 2014, encourage Mifflin, Cordele, Bermuda high to host a large single class handicapped (Super)Regionals, either Sports or FAI-combined. Idea is to make this a highly competitive east coast contest to make up for all the Nationals going west. May need an inverse strategy for 2015 as Nationals move back east.

Decision – No rule changes.

Action – X to reach out to KS re: Mifflin, TO to reach out to organizers re: Cordele, Bermuda High to encourage mixed-FAI Super Regional format. 9B and BB to consider changes in maximum PRL for these types of contests as part of overall re-thinking of how PRL points are calculated.

8.1.3 Coordination with USTC re Mixed FAI and overall Class Evolution (9B)

See discussion 3.3.5, 4 and 8.1.2, above.

Action – 9B to coordinate with USTC as thinking on mixed-FAI contests, PRL calculations and class evolution crystalizes.

8.1.4 Define 13.5m class (BB)

Encourage use of "low performance" based on handicap range rather than 13.5m. There

is a major problem with the FAI definition of 13.5m because it is not handicapped. We also have in the US a number of other gliders that are comparable in performance to the older 13.5m gliders but have larger wingspan than 13.5 m. These could also find a home in a "low perf" class not restricted to 13.5m. There do not appear to be objections on the part of contest organizers to go with handicap ranges vs. wingspan.

Decision – No rule change

8.2 Contest scheduling, site Selection, contest length (2T, 9B, BB)

See separate document. Need a "master plan" for preferred contest siting

KM, QT, XM to put together a plan/schedule for site selection and class pairing starting in 2015, to be submitted to Linda to guide the site selection process. Do we need a more aggressive approach to placing contests where we want them rather than where we happen to get bids from? Do we have enough candidate sites now to be more selective in our site placement?

8.3 Revise finish penalty (Poll, Multiple, BB)

Count	Favor-A	Favor-B	Favor-C	(blank)	Total
National Only	10	11	7		28
Both	22	24	12	3	61
Regional Only	20	58	33	1	112
None	10	13	11	3	37
Total	62	106	63	7	238

Percent	Favor-A	Favor-B	Favor-C	(blank)	Total
National Only	36%	39%	25%	0%	100%
Both	36%	39%	20%	5%	100%
Regional Only	18%	52%	29%	1%	100%
None	27%	35%	30%	8%	100%
Total	26%	45%	26%	3%	100%

- A: The penalty for crossing the finish cylinder below the finish height should be the same as the penalty for a high start, all the way to the ground.
- B: The penalty for crossing the finish cylinder below the finish height should be more severe than for a high start, since safety as well as fairness is a concern, but it should remain a linear penalty all the way to the ground.
- C: Scoring for crossing the finish cylinder below the finish height should be the same as coming up short on a line finish - if you come up short you are scored as a landout (with an allowance for instrument error).

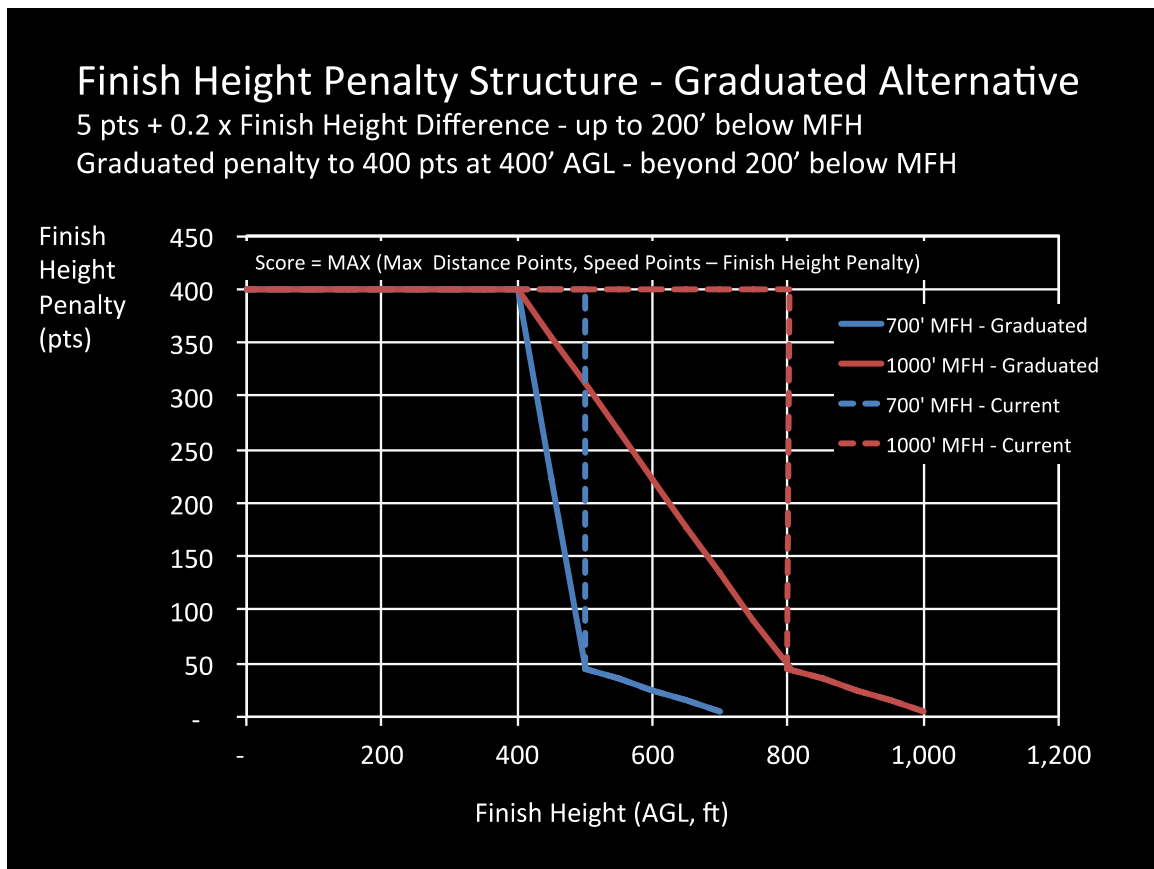
After a great deal of discussion and debate, no change to the rule for 2014. RC trying to avoid making any rules changes unless really necessary. Give current rule another year. General agreement that penalty for being up to 200 ft. below the bottom of the cylinder should be relatively small, as it is now. Also general agreement that there should be no points at stake to encourage a very low finisher to go for the cylinder at an altitude from which (s)he cannot reach the airport (roughly 400' for a 2-mile cylinder). The big question is whether to replace the current hard cutoff (distance points only) for more than 200' below MFH with a graduated penalty. The fundamental problem is that if the graduated penalty is severe enough avoid giving speed points to a very low finisher who can't reach the airport, the penalty gradient is nearly vertical anyway (see attached comparison of current rule and alternate proposal). Penalty structures that accommodate all the constraints also become very complex when coupled with the

different cylinder heights and radii available to organizers. Pilot guidance for simple rules argues for simpler penalty structures.

Proper procedure for setting the finish height should be for organizer to decide on the minimum height of a safe finish (at 1 or 2 miles, whichever is being used) and then add 200 ft for the MFH.

Decision – no rules changes

Action – X to put some guidance on this in the appendix.



8.3.1 Add terrain caveat to 10.9.2.2.1 – Cylinder (BB)

Agreed to add. The CD should also consider the suitability of terrain near the home airport for blown final glides in setting the minimum finish height.

Decision - No change in the rule, guidance only.

Action – X to add terrain consideration to the language in the guidance for CDs in setting MFH. X also to screen rules for “shall” vs. “should” to ensure that advice is not confused with hard requirements

8.3.2 Update appendix wording for Cylinder Finish (BB) [A 10.9.2]

Action – Change per BB document.

9 – Additional Items

9.1 Handling an Elmira "Protest" (McMaster et al) [Rule 11.9.3.3] Criteria for allowing changes to official scores: Relax criteria? Allow more time?

KM has had a number of issues come up like the Elmira situation where there is an obvious scoring error found during the contest after the day is official but before the contest is official. The current criterion for making any change is limited to errors in the scoring program, which has been found to be too restrictive.

Decision – Change rules to allow CD to correct “material errors” in scores even if the day is official, provided the change is made prior to the contest becoming official.

Action – X to draft language.

9.2 Mandatory Flarm (Poll, Multiple)

Lots of discussion. Poll favors organizer option for mandatory Flarm vs. by rule. Related issue – there is a question as to whether Rex Mayes will continue to run the rental Flarm program after 2014.

Availability of rental units, penetration in pilot population, maturity of technology, traffic density considerations, all contributed to concern about changing the rules to make Flarm mandatory. We’ve seen good progress letting the adoption of Flarm happen on its own. Having organizers request a waiver gives us a chance to discuss exactly how they will handle and enforce the requirement.

Decision – No change in the rules for 2014. Allow Regionals to make Flarm mandatory at organizer option by waiver.

Action - 9B will check with Rex re his continuing the rental program. What SSA financial support would he require to continue the rental program? This could be a use for excess sanction fee funds.

9.3 Revise P-P Comms (Poll, multiple)

Poll says no change. Appendix guidance to CD. Teams announced. Frequencies used announced. Walkie-talkies okay by waiver. We continue to think this PP comm and team flying is useful for mentoring, US Team preparation and pilot enjoyment, but have concerns about competitive fairness and regarding safety due to more pilots being off-frequency. Just as for 2013 the organizers can opt not to allow p-p comm by simply announcing this prior to preferential entry. RC is trying to avoid making any rules changes unless really necessary. This idea needs more time to gain experience.

Decision – No change.

9.4 Specific Pilot Proposals

9.4.1 Revise MSH rule (R5S, BB) [Rule 10.8.5.1]

In case of conflict, RC would like to avoid rules violation if MSH and cloud clearance conflict.

Action – X to change “shall” to “should”

9.4.2 A new scoring approach (Sobieski email via KS)

Suggestion to change scoring to distance x speed. After discussion it was decided that this would be a major change, a significant departure from common practices and a significant increase in complexity. It also has unclear implications in terms of pilot workload in trading off distance flown versus speed in trying to maximize score and how to handle scoring for landouts. RC guidance to minimize number and magnitude of changes as well as perceived complexity of rules regarding how pilots fly the task.

Decision - Table for now. Large changes in scoring formulae may be considered as part of rules simplification.

9.4.3 Turn in log rule relaxation (Nixon) [Rule 10.5.1.1]

Prefer to keep things simple by always requiring a log. Keep for safety reasons to keep track of all pilots as there are scenarios where pilots fly XC on cancelled days and logs are part of the mechanism for ensuring that missing pilots are detected.

Decision – No change to rules.

9.4.4 Air Force Suggestions (See separate document)

9.4.4.1 Hard Deck

This has been discussed at length previously. No new information presented to alter current position. Pilots not at all receptive to this. Need to build grass roots support before considering any treatment in the rules.

Decision – No change to rules.

9.4.4.2 Tow Procedures [Rule 10.56.2]

Decision – Not a rules topic. Belongs in guidance to CM.

Action – X to add appendix guidance to ensure tow procedures keep within gliding distance of the airport.

9.4.4.3 Require 123.3 monitoring [Rule 10.7.2.7]

The present rules already cover this by stating that pilots should monitor 123.3. The new language is slightly stronger but does not justify a change. Can't mandate or enforce as there are lots of reasons why a pilot might not pick up a radio call. Language needs to remain "should" not "shall". Not feasible to change to "shall".

Decision – No change to rules.

9.4.4.4 Require Flarm and/or XPNDR

See above. Not quite ready for Flarm to be mandatory.

Decision – No change to rules

9.5 "Always require traces after crash" language for waiver (BB)

See discussion in 5 – Safety Report. There are privacy issues. We would like to know what happened in crashes so that we can all learn from them. Not having the logs is a real hindrance. TO to talk to SSF about them chasing down traces after crashes. TO to talk to Gary Carter, X to talk to TA, about traces for their 2013 crashes.

Action – No changes. Await response from SSF on their intentions.

9.6 Define sanction for leaving contest without notifying CD or CM beforehand (BB)

This is bad behavior but not something that is worth of sanctions in the rules.

Decision - No change

9.7 Handicapping, Scoring and Contest Weighting

9.7.1 Future of UHankdicapping (QT, 5U)

Much discussion of handicapping. Strong support for simplification – one handicap system, only two decimal points, less fiddling for weight, winglets, tape, etc. We currently have 3 handicap “systems” in use in SSA contests: Sports w/weight adjustment, Sports w/o weight adjustment, Standard class handicapping (all models have same handicap, limited range, OK to trick out glider).

Decision – No change in how we use handicaps for now. Any changes remanded to rules simplification project.

9.7.2 Motorgliders need worse handicaps (Poll)

Decision – No action - Matter for the handicap committee

9.7.3 Water-based handicapping needed (BB, Poll)

Handicaps that account simply for water ballast are needed. No clear idea how his can be done.

Decision – Delegate to handicap committee.

9.7.4 Give Seniors / Super Regional Contests a higher contest value than regionals?

See 3.3.5, above. This is part of a larger topic discussed regarding PRL adjustment based on competitiveness of the contest (who’s racing?, how many pilots?, how many days?)

9.8 Scoring

9.8.1 GPS vs. pressure alt for scoring (KM)

Topic came from Poll or SRA meeting. GPS altitude is less accurate. Flight computers are using pressure altitude, as are altimeters and scoring software. No reason to make a change.

Decision – No change in rules

9.8.2 11.1.1 & 11.2.3. Modify definition of “contestant” for a valid day?

No strong push for this to be changed. It was put in place for a good reason many years ago and there are (usually rare) opportunities for gaming both with it and without it.

Decision – No change in rules.

Action - Consider in the simplification effort.

9.8.3 Team Scoring Formula (XM, Fairfield)

Should there be a different way to score teams if team flying is allowed? There is lots of interest in this topic and many ideas, but not enough experience to understand the full effect on competition and entry behavior. RC believes that impact of the various proposed team score systems (lowest daily, average daily, etc) would significantly affect tactics in ways that are very different from team tactics at WGC contests, making it much less useful for team training (admittedly only part of the reason for team flying). It would also add rules complexity – a big negative. Organizer can (probably) note on the score sheet what the teams are to create more clarity (“mystery teams” noted as a negative by some pilots). This is not used enough and does not represent enough of a problem to warrant modifications to the rules. It is hard for a scoring system to compensate for the effects of team flying – if pilots oppose it at a contest, organizers should not allow it, rather than apply an imperfect scoring patch to perceived inequities.

Decision – No change in rules.

9.9 Things that affect how a task is flown

9.9.1 Start procedure: replace 2-min rule with speed limit (Poll comment)

IGC has tried speed limits without good effect. There are significant issues with how to account for wind and airspeed as they affect differences between what a pilot sees and what the logger records. There is a significant potential for complexity, confusion and problems in measurement, enforcement, resulting protests and the need for adjudication. No height limit system is perfect. We continue to think that the 2 min rule is the best of the alternatives. Computers are starting to put automatic 2-minute timers into the software, which helps with part of the issue. Changes in optimal start strategy under the recent revisions to the start rules may also decrease some of adverse pilot behavior associated with the 2-minute time limit.

Decision – No change in rules

9.9.2 Start procedure: simplify to score only the last cylinder exit?

Not necessary. Guy can automate best-start scoring.

Decision – No change in rules

9.9.3 Grand Prix start in regionals(BB)

Much discussion on this topic. RC would like to encourage experimentation in contest formats that increases interest, participation and enjoyment of the sport. GP-style

format should be permitted by waiver and in order to receive SSA sanctioning. PRL of 92 is encouragement to do this within the SSA contest structure instead of outside the SSA system.

Decision – Allow GP start under current SSA Regional contest rules. Retain ALL current rules EXCEPT CD may designate a final start time. The final start time may be the same as gate open time or delayed to allow pilots who want to start earlier to do so. The time from last launch to final start time should be set such that it doesn't disadvantage late launches. Starts after the final start time will be marked to the final start time for the purposes of scoring. The CD shall not allow more than 12 gliders per designated start time. The CD may establish start times for additional groups or classes of up to 12 gliders. Pilot groupings (if more than one) shall be announced not later than the time the task is assigned. Multiple start times must be set at least 15 minutes apart to avoid start congestion.

9.9.4 Multiple Task Attempts

9.9.4.1 No second task attempt (QT) AND 9.9.4.2 No second task attempt without landing (KM, Sazhin)

Traversing the finish cylinder prior to adding additional turnpoints creates a fail-safe way to extend a long MAT. Not a major issue. This use of the rules was understood and discussed by the RC when the rule change was established, but came as a surprise to some when it was put into practice during a contest. Familiarity with the rule and its use will improve over time. It is potentially a useful tool for CDs in constructing long MATs as it may reduce "roll the dice" choices for fast pilots who are under time late in the day.

RC trying to avoid making any rules changes unless really necessary. The RC does not view this rule, or its application, as a problem.

Decision – No change in rules

9.9.5 Remove "front half" start limit (BB)

Request withdrawn by BB

9.9.6 Abolish finish line (BB, Meier)

Organizers should have this option. Organizers don't have to use it if they don't want to.

Decision – No change in rules

9.9.7 Allow finish gate to be higher than 50' (BB, KM)

Withdrawn. Current rule calls for CD to judge finishes visually, which becomes impractical at higher finish altitudes, leading to new rules on how to enforce via GPS and

a concern that it would lead to pilots' heads in the cockpit at a bad time.

9.9.8 Eliminate land on airport after finish requirement (BB, Poll)

Decision – No change. Consider in rules simplification project.

9.9.9 Allow overflight of restricted airspace with penalty (Poll)

Specific situation that came up was overflight of fire fighting pop-up TFRs that had tops well below glider flight altitudes and were small enough to be easily overflown.

Organizers often times can't/don't update the .SUA file daily to reflect pop-up TFRs.

Pilots on their own to figure out how to avoid. Scorers have a problem.

Decision – Rules change. 5.6.2.3 Allow overflight of restricted airspace (except of B, C or P) if specified by the CD with appropriate altitude buffer to ensure no descent into restricted airspace.

9.9.10 Clarify (prohibit) cross-class help (BB)

Withdrawn

9.9.11 Increase airport bonus to 50 (Jones)

Not broken. Leave it alone.

Decision – No change in rules

9.9.12 Provide for motorglider airport bonus (BB, Nadler)

Provide bonus to motorgliders for airport bonus if ENL engine start is within 2 miles of the airport.

Decision – Change rules to allow airport bonus if within 2 miles of airport that is eligible for airport bonus and higher than 1000' AGL. Distance from airport to be determined based on airport location in contest airport file, if included and FAA official airport coordinates if not in the contest file.

9.9.13 Institute remote finish (BB)

Some contests have airport locations that make finishing at the airport problematic for one reason or another (example – Truckee).

Decision – Allow by waiver as needed. Must be constructed such that finishers can make a safe glide to a friendly airport post-finish.

Additional, related topic. BB Proposal for “roll-and-go” starts whereby pilots are automatically given the best scoring fix anywhere in the start cylinder. It is possible that

additional time spent traversing the start cylinder improves a pilot's score versus scoring based on the last complying exit from the start cylinder.

Decision – Reserve for rules simplification.

9.10 Task Guidance

9.10.1 Sports/Club tasking: Target 1.0 handicap performance rather than min/max performance gliders

Tasks should be set to allow all gliders a fair chance to compete. Note that this doesn't mean necessarily that all gliders can complete the task without a landout. This comes up for very low performance gliders such as 1-26. In certain weather, they don't have much of a chance to complete the task. But on good weather days they can really have a handicap advantage. RC thinking is that this evens things out.

Decision - No change in rules. CDs should target the middle of the range of gliders that show up.

9.10.2 Allow CD defined restricted airspace (with flyover ok) (BB)

Decision – Address by waiver as needed.

9.11 Technology

9.11.1 Weather and other technology in cockpit (KM)

Technology is getting smaller, cheaper and more capable but not viewed as a critical issue yet.

Decision – No change in rules

9.11.2 Specifically allow walkie talkies (BB)

Decision - No change. Do by waiver is needed.

9.12 Publishing accident reports. SSF function?

Discussed previously.

9.13 Authority for CD to deviate from 9.0 (BB)

Withdrawn by BB

9.14 Perfect and adopt simplified rules (BB)

RC meeting in either Reno on Mar 2 or at Seniors on Mar 16.

Action – BB to prepare draft doc prior to RC meeting.

9.15 Procedures for low-entry Nationals (BB)

Withdrawn

Additional topic (TO)

Motorglider sustainer air start after launch, before start. Could time be longer?
Currently 2 min. Creates safety issue, risk of immediate relight for sustainers that must
dive to get engine start.

Decision – Rule change. Allow test engine start within 15 minutes. Glider must return to
same place and height where engine was started.