

2014 SSA Rules Subcommittee Meeting

November 15, 2014 -Atherton, CA

MINUTES

1 7:45 AM – Call to Order

1.1 2015 Assignments and Schedule (Group – 10 minutes)

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

Date	Item	Who
Nov 22	Meeting minutes to committee	XM
Nov 29	Minutes comment period ends	Committee
Dec 6	Final meeting minutes published on SSA website	XM / QT
Dec 6	Completed draft of all rules and appendix changes to committee	X
Dec 7 - 20	Rules change review period	Committee
Dec 29	Rules change summary published on SSA website	QT
Jan 10	Pilot comment period closes	Pilots
Jan 17	Final rules changes agreed	Committee
Jan 24	Draft rules published to committee for QA	QT
Feb 1	Final rule documents vetted	Committee
Feb 7	Final rules changes to SSA for BOD (Feb 28)	QT / X
Mar 1	Rules published on SSA website	QT
May, July	RC election announcement	X
8/22	2012 pilot poll questions to writer	Committee
9/6	Draft poll to committee	BB
9/19	Poll to Aland for publication	BB
10/1-10/18	Poll and Election	Chair
Nov	RC Meeting	Chair

1.2 Safety Report Review (BB - 10 minutes)

1.3 Participation Statistics Review (X – 10 minutes)

Participation is down. Possible factors included overlapping and most contests on the West Coast

Pilots listed on the PRL (Pilots Ranking List)	520
Entries in all Regional Contests	458
Entries in National Contests	
18 Meter	21
15 Meter	16
Standard	no contest
Open	9
Sports	12
Club	18
Total	76

1.4 Poll Results Review (QT – 10 minutes)

Response statistics:

	Rules Committee Election (Seeded Pilots)	Pilot Opinion Poll (Seeded Pilots)	UST C Election (SSA Membership)
2014:	162/703 (23%)	157/702 (22%)	228/11787 (2%)
2013:	107	238	77
2012:	unopposed	187	Unopposed
2011:	114	182	239
2010:	unopposed	227	232
2009:	187	184	Unopposed
2008:	159	160	171
2007:	114	124	119
2006:	126	126	227
2005:	159	168	6

Key responses:

- 87% expect to fly the same (45%) or more (42%) contests
- 110/157 (70%) reported using Flarm in 2014 vs. 147/238 (62%) in 2013
- 59% favor forming adjacent FAI handicapped classes in regionals when a class is undersubscribed
- 59/127 (46%) support handicapping 15M ships in 15M Nationals
- 51/157 (32%) don't care for the full Grand Prix Start, only 29 feel that way about the loser start.
- 5/6 disliked their experience using LST. 6/6 liked it. I.e. bogus responses.

2 Infrastructure

2.1 Juniors Contest Subsidy

Background: In its first year 4 pilots applied. This year was 6 with a number of comments that it was the deciding factor to attend.

2.1.1 Proposal: Remove limit of 1 contest per season

* Approved. Limit is removed.

2.2 Revise Sports Nationals Rules to Reflect Separation of US Club

Background: With the separation of Club to a separate venue, the Sports National rules need to be revised to eliminate the US Club/Modern split

2.2.1 Proposal: Remove US Club/Modern Split from Sports National Rules, clarify standing and specifics of US Club Class as standalone competition

- Approved. US Club/Modern Split separation will be removed from the Sports Class Nationals.
- X will rewrite the Sports Class rule

2.3 Scoring Formulae Repair in Rules Text

Background: We have had two years in a row where we have found errors/omissions mid season. With the advent of handicapped FAI class, there is no need to have different sets of formulae for each rule set.

2.3.1 Proposal: Rewrite 11.3 – 11.6 so all four rule sets are identical

- Passed
- X will do.

2.3.2 Proposal: Additionally update names in formulae to be more intuitively descriptive. Add explanatory text to complex rules describing what it does

- XM will write out longhand formulas for appendix.
- X will proofread

2.3.3 Proposal: Additionally separate and identify raw score calculation from day value modifications and individual competitor modifications (e.g. TAT undertime).

???

2.4 Winscore/Web Enhancements/Tracker

Background: Alexander Georgas wrote regarding development of a web based module that could be used for contest scoring. If leveraged with Pedja's Tracker and smart phone logging/reporting, this could make watching US races in real time "real" and boost interest in racing and participation.

2.4.1 Find strategy: How to aggressively nurture?

Rules committee believes this could be a worthwhile endeavor. Future possibilities include an "online scoring program" where a pilot needs only to upload his flight log, along with possible real time flight tracking.

X and BB will investigate possibilities with Alexander Georgas and Pedja.

3 Pilot Requests and Minor Rules Modifications (10 min ea)

3.1 Rotate Grid Differently (F8, SZ)

Background: At the 18 Meter Nationals we experienced two problems. The first was that the grid rotated in such a way that the #1/2 spots (the sniffers) repeated. Second was that the sniffers repeated after a cancelled day.

3.1.1 Proposal (QT): 10.6.1.1 If any entrants are launched, CD may choose to rotate the grid regardless of valid competition day

* CD may rotate the first 2 grid positions (or 4 positions in the case of using 2 sniffers) to relieve the first pilot(s) on the grid from sniffing multiple times after a day is cancelled.

3.1.2 Proposal (QT): 10.6.1.1 CD/Scorer should if necessary vary the 20% slightly to ensure sniffers don't repeat

- Approved. CD/Scorer should check the grid sheet and (if necessary) vary it slightly to ensure that sniffers don't repeat.
- X will write modification.

3.2 Modify Finish Fix on Safety Finish (SZ)

Background: At Montague, the use of the safety finish imposed slower times on finishers, prompting comments that it decreased safety because it was faster to continue on.

3.2.1 Proposal: Modify 10.9.5.5 to delete time / distance adjustment.

* Final segment from the Safety Finish Point to the Finish Point speed will be changed to 90 mph.

Note: the Rules Committee recognizes that this is not a perfect solution and that in theory the best solution is to score to the actual finish point. A scoring calculation problem arises when such a finish does not meet minimum distance and cascades from there in complexity of implementation/programming. The Rules Committee felt that the use of 90 mph was a good compromise that did not involve extensive scoring program changes for a situation that arises very rarely.

3.3 Revise sustainer engine run rule (W3, F8)

Background: Comment is that within 2 miles of home field and 15 minutes is too restrictive. Some pilots want to do an engine run after finish.

3.3.1 Proposal: Modify 10.6.3.3.2 to allow engine run anywhere in Start Cylinder

* Agreed to change the engine run limit to 3 miles from the home field. Re-light rule will also change to 3 miles.

3.3.2 Proposal: Modify 10.6.3.3.2 to allow engine in first 20 rather than 15 minutes

* Approved. Engine may be run up to 20 minutes after tow release.

3.3.3 Proposal: Modify 10.6.3.3.2 to allow engine run after finish

* Approved. Engine run after finish is allowed subject to other engine run restrictions.

3.4 Engine run scorer documentation (W3)

Background: Comment is that task claim card is unnecessarily onerous. Check mark on sign-in sheet is sufficient. QT: However, not all scorers use a sign in sheet and having a different procedure for one type vs another type of engine run is inviting confusion

3.4.1 Proposal (QT): No Change

No change.

3.5 Motorglider flight log gap (W3)

Background: Comment is that the rule limiting motorglider log gaps to 1 minute rather than 15 minutes is too severe. QT comment: consider the coming FES.

3.5.1 Proposal (QT): No Change

No change. A motorglider pilot should have a back up logger to eliminate this issue.

3.6 Start time reporting (TT)

Background: Misunderstood requirement to report start time was part of a protest.

3.6.1 Proposal (QT): Modify 10.8.8 to clarify that start reporting is optional and for the convenience of the organizers only. Reliance on reported start times is at the pilots' own risk and cannot be the basis for a protest

It should be noted that the default was that any start announcement was optional, and any reported start must be truthful.

* Rules Change. Start time reporting may not be made mandatory.

3.7 Handicapped distance AST (Howard Banks)

Background: This task was developed in the UK as an alternative to TAT. TP diameters determined for each glider based on handicap.

3.7.1 Proposal: Encourage by waiver

No change. Rules Committee feels that this new task would add considerable complexity for a minimal benefit. Scoring different tasks for different pilots in the same class adds too much complexity and burden on the scorer.

3.8 Undersubscribed classes in regionals (QT, Poll)

Background: Poll strongly supports the conversion of adjacent classes to FAI handicapped if one FAI class is undersubscribed.

3.8.1 Proposal: Add rule to clarify formation of FAI handicapped classes for an undersubscribed class

- * Approved. CD can elect to combine classes when an FAI class is undersubscribed. (Will be added to the Sanction Class Announcement section)

3.9 Latest Start Time (QT, XM, KM, BB)

Background: Generally not tried last year. Poll cites significant resistance. Safety is raised as an issue. Complexity of current rule is raised.

3.9.1 Proposal: Remove 10.8.5.7 LST rule, allow by waiver

- LST concept is removed. Grand Prix style task will be defined including how to use Winscore to score it. X, XM, QT (max of 10 gliders for this type of task)
- Possibility of the use of a Grand Prix style task must be announced before the contest.

3.9.2 Proposal: Remove 10.8.5.7.1 Make LST rule apply without notice constraints

See above.

3.9.3 Proposal: Simplify 10.8.5.7 LST rule to only be Grand Prix start

See above.

3.10 Multiple task attempts (X, QT, KM)

Background: Comment is that multiple task attempt rule allows a MAT loophole whereby a pilot can perform a "conditional" finish, then go out to see if he can achieve more points. The problem is that this is obscure and unlikely to be apparent to unsophisticated pilots.

3.10.1 Proposal (X): Require announcement of second task attempt on 123.3

Deferred for further review.

3.10.2 Proposal (QT): Require 15ish minute delay between finish and 2nd start

Deferred for further review.

- * *Subsequent to the meeting it was voted that the requirement to land at the contest site after a finish would be recommended for elimination. This simplifies the rule regarding attempting*

the task a second time without jeopardizing the first performance, and also allows a conditional finish prior to attempting more turnpoints in a MAT.

3.11 US Club entrance eligibility to use scratch handicaps (BB)

Background: Current US Club eligibility (6.12.3.1) uses base + handicap mod factor. Someone who has put on weight and not recalculated their handicap may get disqualified at the contest.

3.11.1 Proposal: Restate 6.12.3.1 to specify base handicap is used

* Proposal is approved.

3.12 Allow Bug Wipers (BB)

Background: Sports, US Club and Modern do not allow bug wipers. All FAI classes do.

3.12.1 Proposal: Allow bug wipers in Sports and Modern, but not US Club

No change.

3.12.2 Proposal (QT): Allow bug wipers in all handicapped classes

No change.

3.13 Worst Day Score Adjustment

Background: Has not gained any traction.

3.13.1 Proposal (BB): Make default in regionals for 1 year. Contests may opt out.

No action.

3.13.2 Proposal (QT): Remove.

Deferred, no action.

3.14 Protest Timing (X)

Background: Current rule can result in infinite loop of protests.

3.14.1 Proposal (X): Change rule on protest timing to say "within 24 hours of the time of the protested incident, action or score". This would eliminate the theoretical "perpetual" protest possibility.

* Approved. X will write.

3.15 Minor A/S penalty rule (QT)

Background: Not supported in Winscore as a contest penalty on practice days

3.15.1 Proposal (QT): Remove

* Will be removed.

3.15.2 Proposal (QT): Reclassify as Task Penalty

* Proposal is passed. Penalty will be reclassified.

3.16 Revise devaluation (Kennedy, Huss)

Background: Comments complained about the behavior of the scoring for R9S Day 1 and R9N where many did not get away.

3.16.1 Proposal(BB): Modify "Contestant" to include pre-start landouts (motor use?)

* Any prestart landout or landout in the start cylinder is now considered a "contestant" for the purposes of deciding the devaluation of a day.

3.17 Wing Loading Equalization on No-water Days – Regional and National (LX, SM)

Background: Comments from pilots indicate 6.8.4 does not adequately address the motorglider difference issue on a no-water day.

3.17.1 Proposal: Eliminate 6.8.4. Pilots may choose to show up with fixed ballast that they are not permitted to remove during the contest

3.17.2 Proposal: Eliminate 6.8.4. On an honor basis, allow pilots to add water to match the wing loading of the highest loading motorglider, with the proviso that they must use it every day and dumping it without reporting it as an "engine start" is unsportsmanlike conduct.

- Remove partial "ballast up" rule and leave everything else the same.

The Rules Committee had a very long discussion before deciding to eliminate this rule. It was originally instituted after the Caesar Creek 18 meter nationals. At that contest, the field was so wet that the organizers did not allow water ballast on some days because of launching safety considerations. Many pilots felt that the motorgliders had an unfair advantage by virtue of their heavier wing loading. (Even though the field was wet, the soaring conditions were strong enough to make heavier wing loading a distinct advantage) Typically, "no ballast days" are only called when the soaring conditions are very weak. Like many rules that specifically target a single problem, this rule has unintended consequences. At a recent no ballast contest, pilots argued that they should be able to "ballast up" to the maximum weight called for in the rule. There are many problems with this. To name a few: A Sparrow Hawk ballasted up to the "maximum weight" would have a wing loading of over 11lbs. If a "max wing loading" is used instead of a maximum weight, it becomes very difficult to enforce (the organizers would have to know each glider's wing area and do a calculation to determine if the glider was at the proper weight). The motorglider pilots argue that it's unfair because their competitor's ballast is disposable and theirs is not. In essence, the rule does not work. A better way to address the problem might be to score the class as "FAI Handicapped".

This also emphasizes the need for the Handicap Committee to develop new "watered handicaps".

3.18 Technology in the Cockpit

Background: You can cloud fly with a FlarmView. Policing mobile technology is not realistic. Flarm is an effective tactical tool.

3.18.1 Proposal: Remove prohibition on AH devices (but not cloud flying)

See below.

3.18.2 Proposal: Remove limitation on Smartphone applications

See below.

3.18.3 Proposal: Remove prohibition on in-flight weather

See below.

3.18.4 Proposal: Pursue creation of a competition mode for Flarm that reduces its value as a leeching tool.

No action. Rules Committee encourages everyone to purchase and use FLARM.

3.18.5 Proposal: Add signature language to entry form to acknowledge that (insert list) is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and pilot agrees not to do it (applies to 7.2.2 also).

No action.

Rules Committee plans to remove the prohibition on electronic devices in the cockpit in 2016.
Comments are welcomed.

3.19 Champions Competing in Sports Two-Place (Kennedy)

Background: Comment is that two-seaters have an essential advantage on single seaters

Rules Committee does not want to discourage very experienced pilots from competing in any class.

3.20 Leveling the Playing Field when there are Motorgliders (Kennedy)

Background: Comment is that motorgliders give substantial advantages not related to wing loading (e.g. ease of retrieve

X will summarize

3.21 Review Banning Pilot Procedures (BB)

Background: BB request

3.21.1 Proposal (QT): Defer to Rules Simplification

Reviewed. No change.

3.22 Review guidance on opening start, declaring day invalid ex post (BB)

Background: Prompted by Nephi Protests

3.22.1 Proposal (QT): Defer to Rules Simplification

3.22.2 Proposal (QT): Assign for offline recommendation

3.23 Living Will for Dying Nationals (BB)

Background: BB request

3.23.1 Proposal (BB): Add rule to not allow National to commence with less than the minimum +2 required entries

No change.

3.24 Rules Simplification Project Planning

3.24.1 Proposal (9B): Divide into two sub-projects. First address how we present the rules we have (e.g. collapse to 1 rule set). Second address actual rule changes.

There was a long discussion on the pros and cons of the Simplification Project. Committee plans to revisit on January 10 2015 after reading through BB's proposal. At that time committee will make a decision on whether or not to continue the project, and if so, how to proceed.

3.25 Class Simplification

3.25.1 Proposal (BB): Merge 15 with Standard and handicap down to 0.94

For now, no change. In light of the 15 meter and Standard Nationals both being held at Elmira in 2015, the committee believes there should be a plan B in the event that there are not enough Standards or 15 meter gliders to score 2 separate classes. (In 2014 the Standard Nationals were cancelled because there were not enough entries.)

3.26 Handicaps

3.26.1 Proposal (BB): Recommend 2 decimal places to HC with no glider specific adjustments

No consensus. This should be referred to the Handicap Committee.

3.26.2 Proposal (BB): Request "watered" handicaps from HC

* Approved.

3.27 Ranking

3.28 National classes, locations and coordination

4 Cross Committee Discussions

4.1 Class Evolution

4.2 Ranking and Team Selection

4.3 Shorter Nationals

4.4 Role of Continental Championships