

2016 SSA Rules Committee Meeting Minutes
Reedsville, PA – November 12, 2016

In Attendance:

9B Andy Blackburn
H7 Bif Huss
UH Hank Nixon
DT David Coggins
X John Good

Election of Officers and Committee Appointments

RC Chair	UH
Secretary	9B
Rules Writer	X
Rules Change Summary	DT
Pilots' Opinion Poll writer	H7
Pilots' Opinion Poll publisher	UH
Pilot Ranking List	John Leibacher
Handicap Sub-Committee Chair	TBD
Winscore Liason	UH
SSA Website Liason	9B, UH
Scoring Adviser	John Godfrey
WinScore Development	Guy Byars

Future Schedule

Date	Action	Assignee
11/21	Meeting Minutes to committee	9B
11/28	Minutes comment period ends	All
12/6	Publish minutes on SSA website, Publish Poll results	9B, UH
12/6	Completed draft of all rules and appendix changes to committee, cross reference links vetted.	X
12/7-20	Rules change review period	All
12/29	Publish Rules Change Summary on SSA website	DT, UH
1/10	Pilot comment period closes	-
1/17	Final rules changes agreed	All
1/24	Draft rule change document published to committee for review	UH
1/24-2/1	National FAI rule vetting	9B
1/24-2/1	National Sport rule vetting	UH
1/24-2/1	Regional FAI rule vetting	DT
1/24-2/1	Regional Sport rule vetting	H7
2/1	Final rule documents vetted	All
2/7	Blue book cutoff date - documents transmitted to Hobbs	UH, X
3/1	Publish Rules on SSA website	UH, 9B
3/1	Handicap committee complete with 2017 updates	TBD

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Summer	Call for RC nominations for 2017	UH
8/22	Poll questions to poll writer	All
9/20	Poll to Aland Adams for publication	H7
10/1	2018 Pilot Poll and election announcement	UH
10/1	Poll Opens	UH
10/18	Poll Closes	UH
Nov	2017 RC Meeting	UH

New roll of scoring advisor created to ensure that rules changes don't create scoring problems. John Godfrey (QT) has agreed to fill this roll.

Administration

1. Contest Fees

(Poll question 4.1)

Possible Actions

- a) Lower the fees- 6% poll
- b) Leave the process as currently used-57% poll
- c) Leave fees for Regional contests completely up to organizers and let the market decide.- 36% poll

2. Rule 5.4.2.1.3- Clarify the intent by specifying the maximum number of non-refundable tows when using the variable entry fee method. During mid year, this was agreed to be 6 for Nationals, but not determined for regional contests.

DISCUSSION OF 1, 2:

There is a wide range of costs associated with putting on a contest driven by many different factors, including: 1) club versus commercial host, 2) local versus remote location, 3) host controlled towplanes versus independently operated/ferried-in.

Contest host organizations that lose money are less likely to host again. With the exception of Nephi and Ephrata, consistently held contests are already rare in the western US. Flexibility in setting fees is important to ensuring adequate supply of hosting organizations.

The current wording overly specifies the fee schedule for regionals and leaves the impression that there is no flexibility. Nationals are a closed market controlled by the SSA. There is greater need for tighter price oversight. A range of views were discussed, between 100% free market to no change. Also discussed was whether it is necessary to have a 100% fixed fee option (Mifflin prefers this) as opposed to fixed fee plus per tow fee with a minimum number of tows charged to cover towpilot costs in the event of a total washout.

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DECISION ON 1, 2:

- Soften wording to reinforce that fees in the rules are guidelines and that organizers are free to request other fee levels as required by their costs.
- Specify maximum number of non-refundable tows that can be included at 4 for a Regional Contest and 6 for a National cContest.

3. Poll participation. 136 people responded, down from 178 last year. Election participation was 102 compared to 176 last year. About half of the national pilots responded. Multiple announcements were made on RAS and an e-mail blast to all on the ranking list was done twice. About 60 out of the total of about 560 came back as bad addresses, or Spam filtering. Comments were numerous and thoughtful by those that participated. It isn't clear if pilots are satisfied, complacent, frustrated, or just don't care.

DISCUSSION OF 3:

Poll participation is a cause for concern. In particular it tends to omit the views of less active/committed pilots who are important to ensuring that contests have adequate participation to be economically viable to host organizations. Various approaches were discussed, including longer response period and more reminders in more places with easy links to the poll.

DECISION ON 3: Recommend CD's/RC members plug the Pilot's Poll at SSA sanctioned contests.

4. RC Election. Bif Huss elected to 4 year term. 102 votes cast compared to 176 in 2015. David Coggins appointed to 1 year term to fill seat vacated by Mike Smith.

DISCUSSION OF 4:

Secret handshakes were exchanged with the new members. No further conspiracies were discussed.

5. Shortage of CD's. Denise Layton is looking for a CD for Hobbs. Cordele is also looking for a CD.

DISCUSSION OF 5:

This is a significant issue. It is difficult to cultivate and incentivize people to take on the CD role. Possible approaches discussed included:

- Tapping pilots who have retired from racing
- Increasing rewards and recognition, including: extension of PRL ranking by 1 year (current rule), waiver of all sanction fees for 1-year, reminders to pilots to CD once per every 10-20 contests flown, publicizing on the SSA website and via email all those who played a leading role in hosting a contest (CD, CM, Scorer).

DECISION ON 5:

- Pursue all of the above actions.

6. Change US competition to use FAI rules - Various communications.

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DISCUSSION OF 6:

Long discussion of this issue and the various considerations associated with making a move, including: starts, finishes, tasking, penalties, scoring, incentives and pilot behavior (esp. gagging and to what extent it is driven by rules), team flying, impact on participation, impact on US Team competitiveness and how to get input from US pilots.

There was a recognition that the current US scoring system is dependent on a single developer, Guy Byars. Guy has undertaken a significant rewrite of WinScore in 2016 or which the RC (and scorers) are deeply grateful. Ultimately, a contingency plan for scoring contests by other means may be required, though it is not an urgent matter at the present time.

It was agreed that there should be no generic opposition to “globalization” of rules for US contests. There was also agreement that the RC should also reinforce guidance to CDs to use a balanced assortment of task types. Several specific concerns were raised around how the FAI treats several topics related to scoring and incentive for gagging, team flying, penalties and tasking as relates to landouts where US pilot polling indicates significant potential for negative pilot reaction and possible impact on participation.

Some of these issues may not be inherent to FAI rules per se and could potentially be addressed in local procedures (for instance, the WGC at Uvalde implemented as a local procedure a finish cylinder with MFH much higher than is common practice in other FAI rules contest).

John Good described an effort under way (with the help of IGC representative Rick Sheppe and John Cochrane) to propose changes to the FAI rules as regards scoring of distance versus speed points. FAI scoring formulae currently award speed versus distance points in a way that penalizes isolated landouts more heavily than US rules and rewards isolated finishers much less than US rules, making the risk/return tradeoff of leaving a gaggle much less favorable (especially on a day with weak or variable weather where landout probabilities are higher). This scheme also has the side effect of making it advantageous for fast finishers to orbit for long periods prior to finishing (or even deliberately land out) to maximize scores under certain circumstances. The IGC has recognized these issues and is considering approaches to reduce or eliminate them and is considering options closer to the treatment under US rules.

DECISIONS ON 6:

- Develop comprehensive list of differences between US and FAI rules and recommendations on opportunities to harmonize, either through changes to US rules or through use of FAI local procedures (e.g. finishes).
- Support US/FAI rules harmonization efforts – consider opportunities to cover additional areas of difference from above.
- Obtain specific feedback on potential rules harmonization via pilot meetings at contests and pilot poll.

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7. RC election procedure. There were multiple SSA members from two different regions seeking to run for the RC this year who were unable to do so due to the restriction limiting each Region to one nominee put forward by the Regional Director.

DISCUSSION of 7:

The intention of the current restriction is to encourage regional diversity on the RC. The consensus was that it is fairer to allow anyone wanting to run to be able to.

DECISION ON 7:

- Remove restriction on number of nominees per region.

Participation

8. Contest participation – UH analysis. Total entries in 2016 were 455 compared to 415 for 2015. Regionals were flat. Nationals up substantially at 145 compared to 102 in 2015. (Full report appended).

9. Barriers to participation – Poll comments.

DISCUSSION OF 8, 9:

General downtrend with recent recovery seemingly attributable to success of Nephi and interest in Open Class from JS-1 and 20-Meter owners. Springfield, VT was also a welcome addition. Polling indicates primary drivers of falling participation are: time, cost and other interests.

DECISION ON 8, 9:

- Encourage innovative regional (and local) contests that are less demanding of time and develop new racing pilots.

10. Guest entries. Permit guest entry of a sailplane that does not meet the requirements of any class in the contest. (Nico Bennet e-mail request).

DISCUSSION OF 10:

This has come up in particular with 20-meter, but may also happen with other classes if there is no Sports Class in the contest. Since guests do not affect the scores of official entrants there is no reason to deny guests entry though there may be scoring anomalies for the guest(s) if contest officials elect not to use handicaps.

DECISION ON 10:

- Allow guests to fly non-class conforming gliders if no conforming option is available. Encourage participation in closest class by performance handicap.

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Nationals Options

11. Consider whether the co- location of 3 classes, Open, 15M, Std, as has been done for the last 2 years, may have the effect of limiting participation due to class allocation. UH recommendation is to pair Std. with another class.

12. Merge 15 Meter and Standard Classes? X input

13. Consolidating Classes for Nationals? X input

DISCUSSION OF 11, 12, 13:

Nephi had three classes and a long waiting list for entries. Unclear how many dropped off/made other plans due to the length. Getting all the classes launched within an hour proved daunting (though the contest did an admirable job of making the most of the resources they had to work with). Three classes may be too much to ask for many sites if turnout is high. Site selection and class pairings are highly constrained problems due to limitations of bids, east/west considerations and class overlaps such as 15/18M.

Merging of classes is a tradeoff of big classes versus pure classes. How low does participation have to get before a Nationals lacks sufficient highly-ranked pilots to be worthy of naming a national champion? Handicapping of flapped versus unflapped gliders is particularly daunting because the fair handicap varies with cruise speed, which is a function of lift strength. Many Standard Class Pilots have moved to 15M/18M Class, which may have been one consequence of keeping Standard pure. Is it bad to require pilots to upgrade gliders to remain in a competitive class and potentially leave others who can't upgrade? Peter Deane has been working on a comprehensive analysis of handicaps to try to address the matter as fairly as possible.

DECISIONS ON 11, 12, 13:

- Continue to keep Standard and 15M together. Consider co-locating Open with Sports.
- Defer merging of any classes and continue to monitor status of class participation at Nationals.

14. (Placeholder for ad hoc topics in this section – none offered).

Sailplanes/ Equipment

15. FLARM- poll data and comments. Review current estimates of adoption.

- 87% of Poll responders flew with FLARM in 2016.
- 57% indicated it has alerted to situation that caused flight path alteration.
- 12% indicated FLARM had caused a reduction in situational awareness.
- Poll comments strongly support FLARM use.

Consider if, or when FLARM may be mandated. Define criteria for consideration of mandate.

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16. Flarm as tactical tool/Stealth. Poll. UH

Very few comments were provided that favor reduction in FLARM capabilities for sporting considerations. Many more emphatically supported no Stealth.

17. Tracking- Are any actions required coming out of the Poll, section 3.2?

Poll respondents supported allowing without restriction (19%) or allow and encourage(52%).

DISCUSSION OF 15, 16, 17:

Strong support for use of FLARM. Need more information on whether making FLARM mandatory would be an undue cost burden on some pilots. Mandatory stealth mode has been abandoned for a combination of technical, pilot preference and liability reasons. Considerable discussion of FLARM use as tactical tool – including FLARM radar tracking information – which is quite prevalent at WGC.

DECISIONS ON 15, 16, 17:

- 9B to inquire whether Flarm ownership, usage data can be harvested from electronic contest registration forms.
- 9B to inquire on status of PowerFLARM rental program
- Mandatory FLARM carriage to remain organizer option for 2017
- Contest organizers cannot mandate Flarm mode used by individual pilots
- Maintain the prohibition on receipt of competitive information in the cockpit. This includes a prohibition on receipt of FLARM radar tracking information by any means (i.e. whether via data network or human radio relay).

18. Cockpit data reception- weather information. X

DISCUSSION OF 18:

Weather in the cockpit is not directly competitive but can have both tactical and safety benefits. Considerable discussion of what level of detail and timeliness of information is available, or might become available soon - from weather radar that is minutes old to satellite photos that can show Cu development. General agreement that much of this information is available on most smartphones and that most pilots do (or could) carry such phones in the cockpit at no financial hardship. Availability on commonly installed glide computers is already happening.

DECISION ON 18:

- Remove weather data prohibition for 2017

19. Tracking information into cockpit. X

FLARM “radar”
Ground sources

DISCUSSION OF 19:

Basically an extension of the discussion of 17 to include satellite and cellular trackers.

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DECISION ON 19:

Continue prohibition of receiving tracking information in the cockpit. Encourage use of trackers for position reporting to contest officials and crew/spectators.

20. Bug wipers in Club

Michael Westbrook e-mail request:

“One item I put down in the pilot poll comments was allowing the use of bug wipers in all classes at nationals. Currently they are allowed in all except for Club/Sports. I believe that for Club Class it should be allowed since we are using these results to select the US Team and it is another factor pilots should be more familiar with. They are much less expensive to install than winglets, even if buying a kit or a person can manufacture their own. They do not add any performance but help maintain it. This is especially critical in many of the older sailplanes such as the Pik-20 or LS-3 which can lose 20% of their performance by the end of a day when it is critical in weakening conditions. Just my two cents, I think if it is allowed in the other classes there isn't a reason it should be blocked in club where there is probably a bigger advantage in some sailplanes with old airfoils.”

DISCUSSION OF 20:

Bug wipers are allowed today in other classes, but not generally used as many US contest sites don't suffer the bug density of European sites (where wipers are more prevalent). The prohibition seems an unnecessary complication in the rules as it provides mostly a psychological – as opposed to performance – benefit under US conditions. US Team members who wish to install them for use in WGC with lots of bugs ought to be able to do so.

DECISION ON 20:

Remove prohibition on bug wipers in Club Class.

Motor Gliders

21. Relaxed restrictions on MG relights - X input

DISCUSSION ON 21:

MG already have considerable benefits. The RC dramatically simplified MG relight rules in 2015 and feels the changes were a significant improvement. Further relaxation on rules around altitudes or distances from the airfield would unfairly disadvantage non MG competitors in a number of circumstances. In addition many special procedures put an extra burden on scorers.

DECISION ON 21:

- No change in relight procedures.

22. Relaxed restrictions on MG airfield bonus eligibility- X input

DISCUSSION OF 22:

Some MG pilots feel it is unfair to have to commit to a “landing” (engine start) at 1,000' AGL to receive an airport bonus when non-MG pilots can go lower to try for a save.

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This rule was modified in 2015. MGs have significant advantages in outlanding situations – such as not having to land out and get retrieved. The 1,000' requirement is to ensure that MG pilots (regardless of type of engine installation) have sufficient altitude to deploy the motor and make a landing if the engine fails to start. If a MG pilot wishes to attempt a save from a lower altitude (s)he may still get the airport bonus by landing at the airport just like non-MG pilots do, or the MG pilot may forego the airport bonus in exchange for the convenience of not having to land out, or the MG pilot may start the motor at 1,000' if getting home without a retrieve is more important than 25 points.

DECISION ON 22:

- No change in MG airport bonus requirements

23. FES implications- X input

DISCUSSION OF 23:

FES, due to quick deployment and reliable operation, could result in more tactical risk taking than with current turbo or motor gliders. Electric sustainers with traditional mounting have nearly equivalent capabilities and electric start turbos are a significant improvement in this regard versus traditional turbos. This is an extremely complex topic with no simple or obvious rules-based approaches.

DECISION ON 23:

- No change – not enough information.

24. Motor glider engine operation prior to the start

Richard Kellerman e-mail:

"I'd like to further suggest that a simplifying change be made to the Rules in regard to MG engine operation prior to the start. The current requirement to return to release height after an engine run can be hard to comply with on a weak day late in the launch order, hard enough that under these conditions I don't perform a precautionary engine start. This has some safety implications since a precautionary start significantly increases the chance that the engine will start next time. I suggest that the rules be amended to require only that any MG pre-start engine run cannot exceed 30 seconds and that a second engine start (other than for self-relight purposes which would remain covered by the current rules) would be disqualifying. Even electric-start gliders lose about as much altitude in deploying, starting, stopping and stowing the engine as they could gain in 30 seconds. Under the proposed change I could climb to a safe height, move to a safe distance from other gliders and go through the involved and distracting deploy/start/run/stop/stow process without also worrying about other gliders."

DISCUSSION OF 24:

RC does not see the current procedure as burdensome. It is also important that competitors do not see any perceived advantage. Request also potentially adds work to the scorer and requires a scoring program change.

DECISION ON 24:

- No change

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Starts

25. Starts out the top have had a significant negative effect on the ability of the scorer to publish accurate scores in a timely manner. It has the benefit of adding an additional tactical variable to the task and a tendency to spread the field.

Possible actions

- a) Leave as is.
- b) Eliminate to simplify and streamline scoring.
- c) Ask Guy Ford Byars to automate selection of best start. This is a complex issue due to “circular computations”. To have the intended result, some changes to the start process and scoring will be required.

[JDG/QT] Hopefully the RC will successfully address this issue. The scorer still has to visit each flight to determine that the automatically selected start is the “best scoring” one. And as Guy correctly points out, the current rules preclude automatic selections of the “best scoring start.”

- d) Consider what change(s) need to be made to retain start out the top while mitigating the scoring issues.

DISCUSSION OF 25:

Guy Byars reports having found an automated way to select the best scoring start.

DECISION ON 25:

- No change needed.

26. Multi point starts- Rule 10.8.4. This rule provides for up to 4 cylinders to spread out starts and reduce gaggle flying. UH introduced this and it has been available for about a dozen years. It has not gathered favor and has not been used to any great extent. Propose: Remove rule for simplification and shortening of the rules. UH

DISCUSSION OF/DECISION ON 26:

- Not used, delete from rules

Tasking/Flying

28. MAT task guidelines for the use of the “long” version (enough assigned points to limit or prevent pilot options).

DISCUSSION OF 28:

Agreement that CDs should be encouraged to use the “long” version when calling MATs to reduce instances of “free distance” tasks being called. Proper calling of long-MATs also requires more turnpoints close to the finish (and not on mountain tops that

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may be un-reachable if used to extend a final glide) to reduce instances where pilots face a choice between being under time or risking an outlanding at the end of the task.

DECISION ON 28:

- Add narrative to better describe and give guidance on task (and turnpoint layout) design considerations.

29. Handicap Distance Task.

Ruf e-mail:

"I would like to see regional sports rules allow us to test the "Handicap Distance task" as has been described on RAS and used in the UK".

DISCUSSION OF 29:

This task type requires purpose-built software (and/or considerable manual effort by the scorer) to design, communicate to pilots and score the task. Other issues with respect to fairness to higher-performance gliders were discussed. In general the RC promotes innovation and experimentation.

DESCSION ON 29:

- Consider by waiver – subject to demonstration of ability to perform scoring and post scores, contest results, produce scores for input to systems that perform PRL calculations, etc.

Finish

30. Finish - New rule implemented in 2012 providing for distance points only when more than 200 feet below the bottom of the finish cylinder has had some negative feedback. Review 2016 poll results and consider actions to refine this rule. 9B to take the lead on this topic.

Possible actions:

- a) Leave as is.
- b) Eliminate 200 foot cushion for simplification - Poll item 5.1, topic number 1.
- c) Revise penalty for low finish to progressive penalty over a taller altitude band. 9B

DISCUSSION OF 30:

9B presented an analysis of considerations and a set of possible alternative penalty structures (presentation appended). Primary objectives of any penalty structure is twofold: 1) provide an incentive for a pilot to take any positive rate climb rather than finish low by making the penalty gradient steeper than the points lost by stopping to climb in a weak thermal. 2) Remove any points incentive for a pilot to press on to a finish at an altitude from which (s)he does not have a decent chance to reach the runway

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in decent shape. This altitude is somewhat variable and subjective, based on finish cylinder radius and runway configuration compared to finish direction as well as landing options for other finishers interacting with low finishers with limited ability to loiter. Other considerations are that the penalty be easy to understand and integrate into final glide decision-making without undue mathematical calculation. Recommended alternative penalty structure was a flat 1-point per foot penalty from MFH to 600' AGL (but not less than Max Distance Points).

DECISION ON 30:

- Agreed that 1-point per foot penalty would be the leading candidate for potential rule change due to simplicity, conformance with the two main objectives of a finish penalty and addressing the major complaints on the 2012 rule. Unclear if the benefits are great enough to justify a change to the rule and the scoring software.
- Defer - Consider poll question for 2017 to gauge pilot interest for potential implementation in 2018.

Scoring

31. Scoring and information availability –

Poll 6.1 How strong is your desire to know your accurate score (online) within a few minutes of submitting your log file? 16% responded “very strong” and 51% responded “nice to have”.

Poll 6.2 How strong is your desire to have immediate access to other's log files once their log is submitted? 11% responded “very strong” and 32% responded “nice to have”.

Both these responses, in addition to poll 6.4, indicate that these considerations need to be raised in the planning of RC initiatives.

DISCUSSION OF 31:

Significant progress has been made in automated processing of log files (esp “start out the top”) and near-continuous uploading of scoresheets (thanks to Guy Byars for these efforts).

DECISION ON 31:

- Changes implemented. No further action contemplated pending feedback form scorers and pilots in 2017.

32. Poll – simplification topic – turnpoints: If the pilot does not get at least one fix within an assigned turn cylinder, the pilot is landed at the point of furthest progress. If it is a claimed turn in an MAT, the turn is not valid. (Currently, you can turn between 1 and 2 miles and get credit for the turn point with a penalty).

DISCUSSION OF 32:

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Poll indicated this is a popular treatment to not land pilots out for small errors or inability to get all the way to the turn, due to (for instance) elevation of surrounding terrain.

DECISION ON 32:

- No change

33. Poll simplification topic – airspace. Airspace penalties would become effective with one fix in the airspace or buffer. (Currently, coming within a horizontal or vertical buffer generates a small graduated penalty.) The buffers are effectively a warning zone having a graduated penalty for entering them. For simplicity they can be removed. It is up to the pilot to establish his warning criteria in the flight computer.

DISCUSSION OF 33:

This is primarily about 17,500 vs 18,000', which is typically only at issue in the western US where thermals can be strong and thermal surges can carry glider upwards of 1,000' in a single turn. Violations of 17,500' are relatively common under the current rule. There is a preference not to have violations of Class A with similar regularity.

DECISION ON 33:

- No change

34. Revise the requirement for a valid day to be based on launches, rather the number of pilots with a non zero distance? X

WRT the SMTD issue, the key element is that the rules now include as a contestant for scoring purposes a pilot who lands out before the start (UH – does this include motor glider starts that do not qualify as a relight?).

DISCUSSION OF 34:

This is a tradeoff between pilots being able to kill a day and pilots needing to land out to make a day that has become hopeless for a large number of competitors due to significant shifts in weather. Both have happened. This is primarily about how CDs ensure that all pilots have a fair opportunity to compete before opening the task.

DECISION ON 34:

- No change in rule. UH to craft language to advise CDs on best practices and obligations to ensure fair opportunity to compete.

35. Contest penalties - Currently, contest penalties that occur on non-contest days (i.e on practice days during a National, or on cancelled days) are not handled correctly. The RC could revisit why National practice days and Regional practice days need to be handled differently to simplify the rules. But the score sheet and contest summary needs to correctly present the application of contest penalties, which it currently does not. QT.

DISCUSSION OF/DECISION ON 34:

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- No change to rule. UH to resolve how to present contest penalties on scoresheet.

36. Poll simplification topic – The scored completion ratio (Rule 11.6.2) that adjusts the score of all pilots on timed tasks (MAT and TAT) based on the number of pilots that complete the task. Currently this devaluation starts at 80% finishers based on the principle that the number of pilots not completing the task is an indication of the fairness of the day. A case can be made that the pilots have the option to return and finish and, therefore, the day and associated scores should not be devalued by their choice not to return for a speed finish. 44% said it should be part of score calculation and 28% said it should not.

37. Poll simplification topic. The under time finishers rule (UF- rule 11.6.5.2) adjusts scores on timed tasks based upon the number of pilots that finish more than 15 minutes earlier than the assigned task time. This devaluation again was based on the principle that pilots come home early due to the quality of the day. 46% said it should be part of the score calculation and 33% said it should not.

38. Poll simplification topic. The current rules have a provision in MAT tasks called the under time factor (UTF - rule 11.6.5.1) that gives a small benefit to the pilot score based on how much under time the pilot is when finishing. The purpose is to be a "tie breaker" among all the pilots that fly the same turns and finish under time and to provide an incentive to keep racing even if an undertime finish is inevitable. It is among the provisions that most commonly make pilots think their score is wrong because the scored speed does not agree with either the speed actually flown or distance divided by time assigned. While elegant, the question is whether it is worth the complication and confusion that can result. 35% said it should be part of the score calculation and 39% said it should not.

39. Poll simplification topic. Rule 11.6.5.2 for TAT tasks has a provision that moves progressively towards using actual time on course instead of assigned time to calculate the scored speed once the pilot flies more than 85% of the maximum possible distance if (s)he finishes under time. This is commonly due to an under call and mostly affects the higher performance gliders in handicapped classes. In the Poll 49% said it should be part of the score calculation and 32% said it should not.

DISCUSSION OF/DECISION ON 36, 37, 38, 39:

General pilot preference for retaining undertime adjustments.

- Retain adjustments in rules, except:
- Delete 85% rule – it is unnecessarily complex and makes it virtually impossible for a pilot to assess time/distance tradeoffs on course. Retain UTF.

40. QT request – fix this please:

11.2.2.8.2 Notwithstanding the withdrawal of flight documentation, the pilot's daily status as a Competitor and a Finisher shall be determined and used in calculating daily scores for other entrants.

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DISCUSSION of 40:

UH recommendation is to eliminate this rule.

DECISION ON 40:

- A withdrawal should be treated as a DNC for scoring purposes.

41. (Placeholder for ad hoc topics in this category. None came up).

Class Issues

42. 20-Meter, 2-seat Class – Poll 7.1 Interest in the 20-Meter, 2-seat Class flown in WGC is increasing in the US. The RC is beginning the process of considering this group as a US National class in much the same manner as the Club class was introduced. Would you participate in this class if introduced as a National class? 24% said yes.

If implemented should the 20-Meter, 2-seat Class incorporate limited handicapping, likely in the range of about 5% to encourage participation. 63% said yes.

DISCUSSION OF 42:

Lots of energy, enthusiasm and growing popularity, particularly with increasing numbers of sailplane models in the class. Some concerns about absolute numbers to sustain a Nationals that appear to be on a path to being resolved with current shipment rate into the US. Other concerns about impact on Open Class that has seen a resurgence recently with 20M 2-seaters included.

DECISION ON 42:

- Target 2018 season for first US 20M, 2-Seat Class Nationals, with expectation of at least 15 competitors for contest to be sanctioned.
- Class will include limited handicap to accommodate unflapped gliders (Duo, DG 1000).

43. Need to develop a handicap list in which aerodynamically equivalent gliders of differing empty weights have the same handicap and reference weight. RC needs to advise Handicap committee. UH

DISCUSSION OF 43:

This is a significant error in how handicaps are currently calculated and confers an unjustifiably large handicap to specific glider models versus their aerodynamic equivalents at the same wing loading.

DECISION ON 43:

- Handicap subcommittee to converge handicaps for aerodynamically equivalent gliders at same wing loading regardless of whether a motor is installed.

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44. Handicapped FAI Class with ballast. X

DISCUSSION OF 44:

Ballast allowed up to legal max at pilots' choice. How to allow for weak towplanes? Wing loading limit? How to establish "fair" handicap numbers given a wide range of wing loading capabilities? A version of this has been used at Truckee Regional with promising results.

DECISION ON 44:

- Allow, under waiver, to test potential issues and complications. X to draft rules.

45. Allowing Motorgliders to continue to fly in Club Class if handicap (adjusted for takeoff weight) permit it.

DISCUSSION OF/DECISION ON 45:

- Continue to allow. No reason to not to if weight-adjusted handicap is within Club Class range. A motor with a light pilot or a heavy pilot without a motor in aerodynamically equivalent gliders is a distinction without a practical difference.

US Team Considerations

46. An annual topic for discussion is the extent to which our contests should prepare potential US Team pilots for World- level competition. Input collected by X.

DISCUSSION OF 46:

Proper preparation of team members for WGC is critical to success. Some considerations:

- a) Class structure that yields at least 20 to 25 pilots in a class
- b) Allow team flying
- c) Scoring changes that increase the incentives for gagging.
- d) Encourage to use of low finishes
- e) Eliminate the airfield landing bonus
- f) Use start lines and other schemes for start height control

US Team members report that team flying psychology is the most critical factor, followed by gaggle flying tactics.

DECISION ON 46:

- In addition to FAI rules convergence efforts, explore ways to select and train team members in critical skills discussed above.

Other items not included in agenda

47. None noted at draft time.

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48. None noted at draft time.

Safety Topics

49. Safety report generated by UH and X.

DISCUSSION OF/DECISION ON 49:

No rules-relevant issues or patterns apparent in safety incidents/accidents.

Communication With Pilots

50. Getting Our Message Out. Low poll response raises the question of how well we are communicating.

DISCUSSION OF/DECISION ON 50:

- Explore ways to communicate more effectively with pilot community. We should always strive to improve.