

To: John Good, Chair, SSA Competition Committee
From: John Godfrey, Chair, SSA Competition Rules Sub-Committee
Subject: Report for Winter 2015 SSA Board of Directors Meeting
Date: February 17, 2015

1. 2015 Season Rules Changes

The Rules Sub-Committee has completed and submitted to the SSA Board the proposed rules changes for the 2015. The changes this year are relatively small and have not produced any large controversy during the pilot comment period.

It is a continuing challenge to enable motorgliders to compete safely in their classes and keep the playing sky "level" so we continue to review motorglider-related rules annually.

2. Contest Safety

There were no contest-related fatalities or serious injuries reported in 2014; 3 of the incidents related to damage sustained during off-field landings. There were 3 reported gear-up landings on airports.

Again this year, John Cochrane prepared a summary of the contest-related accidents which was announced and posted on the SSA website. Not all incidents are being reported to the SSA by contest managers. We are working to improve this process so after-the-fact work to track down information is minimized.

Promoting participation in fair and satisfying competitions consistent with acceptably safe operations is the most important goal of the Rules Committee. All other objectives and rules changes are contained in this context.

3. Poll Results

During the year, comments, suggestions and observations are gathered from the pilot and organizer community, which form the basis for the annual Pilot Opinion Poll. Sources for poll topics include minutes from a number of meetings with pilots, crews, and organizers held at various contests this year, along with private communications from pilots to the committee. Below is a recap of key poll findings.

- 22% of the seeded pilot community (157/702) responded to the poll this year.
- 87% expect to fly the same or more contests in 2015
- Reported Flarm usage is up to 70% from 67%. The Flarm rental program will continue for this year.

4. US Club Class

This year the US Club Class will have its first National contest separate from the Sports Class. The Sports Class national will also be held but there will be no "Modern" subclass in Sports.

We have received entries to the US Club Class Nationals from a few pilots who are returning to competition after a long time. This is encouraging and the desired effect

5. Junior Support

The program to subsidize the contest expenses of junior pilots is being expanded to cover multiple (rather than one) contests per year per junior. Participation in program has been increasing but remains in the single digits.

6. Looking to 2016 Changes that may be Major

There is work in progress to draft a major overhaul to the competition rules to address a number of items:

- Simplification of the presentation of the rules and elimination of extraneous/obsolete rules
- Accommodate an increased interest in scoring that more closely follows the international formulae. This is related to other efforts to increase the competitiveness of the US Team in the WGC.
- A potentially controversial change to reduce/remove restrictions on technology that may be carried/used in the cockpit. One aspect of this change would enable better real-time tracking during races, hopefully increasing the interest in following the races by non-participants and potentially positively affecting participation in the sport. However, as a side effect it would remove the restrictions that are now in place (although essentially unenforceable) prohibiting carrying electronic cloud flying technology (Note: there is NO concept of permitting cloud flying, and we are looking at alternate enforcement technology). We are announcing this now to encourage vigorous debate among the community this season.

Respectfully submitted,
John Godfrey (QT), Chair