

2010 SSA Rules Committee Meeting Minutes

Waller Texas
November 13, 2010

In Attendance

QT John Godfrey
XM Mike Smith
UH Hank Nixon
BB John Cochrane
KM Ken Sorenson
X John Good (volunteer)

Election of Officers and Committee Appointments

RC Chair	UH
Secretary	XM
Rules Writer	JG/QT
Rules Change Summary	QT
Pilots' Opinion Poll writer	BB
Pilots' Opinion Poll publisher	Aland Adams
Pilot Ranking List	John Leibacher
Handicap Sub-Committee Chair	Dave Stevenson
Handicap Sub-Committee	Dan Cole
Diagram contact person for Seaborn	QT
Website announcements & publications	QT

Future Schedule

Date	Action	Assignee
11/23	2010 Meeting Minutes to committee	XM
11/30	2011 Draft rule changes to committee	X
12/7	Rules Change Summary to committee	QT
12/14	Committee responses back to Chair	all
12/15	Publish minutes on SSA website	UH
12/22	Publish Rules Change Summary on SSA website	UH
1/15	Blue book cutoff date - documents transmitted to Hobbs	UH
May, July	2011 RC Election announcement (SSA website, .ras, PRL email)	UH
Open 9/30	2011 Pilot Poll announcement (SSA website, .ras, PRL email)	UH
8/21	2011 Pilot Poll questions to writer	all
9/7	Draft poll to committee	BB
9/21	Poll to Aland for publication	BB
10/18	Poll closed	
10/24	Poll results published & announced (SSA website, .ras, PRL email)	UH
Nov	2011 RC Meeting	

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There was discussion about the dissemination of the rules committee information to make sure that all pilots have a chance for input.

Notice of poll and rules committee elections should be both on the SSA website and RAS, and sent via email to the current contest pilots.

Ken will send to all pilots via email.

John Godfrey will put all rules committee info and announcements on the SSA webpage and become the new SSA website interface chairman.

After the poll is closed, the results will be posted on the SSA web site.

Administration

1. Review and agree to philosophy of rules evolution.

UH presented a "Philosophy of Rules Evolution" document. It discussed the rules process including items such as safety, new technology, and participation. After discussion it was decided that this document would not be adopted as presently written.

2. Fixed entry vs. fee +tows. Rates should make sense. QT/UH 3/16

The "fixed plus tow" format is not intended to equal the "fixed fee" contest since it's not expected to fly every day.

If the organizers want any increase in fees, they should use the fixed cost plus tow format, and then lobby Ken. Any ferry fees or other fees should be added into the fixed fee structure.

Ken will email this info to the organizers.

3. Definition of "US Pilot" in 5.2.5.1 (Milner email 6/25) E-1 visa qualify as US entrant?

Re: Nationals. Do we want someone with an E1 (must be in US for business) or E2 (someone who invests a lot of money in the US) to be considered a "US Pilot"? The current system has worked well and matches the US team selection process. The entrant should not count as a contestant toward requirements for a valid contest unless that pilot can be on the US team. This issue was driven by the small turn out at the Open class nationals. No change.

4. Effect of Regional director combining. This does not change regions for contest purposes- yet. We have to watch this- UH, QT 9/10

Continue to recommend to the SSA Board that Regions not be combined even though directors have been combined. KM has already made this recommendation to the Board.

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5. Contest summary form SSA SC 40 in PDF which makes it impossible for CD and CM to exchange via email to fill our respective sections before submission. There should be two separate forms for this, one for the CD, one for the CM. Sheppe contest reports

X will contact John Seaborn and request that the CM and CD forms be PDF fill-able and savable. QT can help if needed.

6. Organizer's checklist. Delete proof of ownership check box. Second request. UH

X will ask John Seaborn to have Doug Easton remove the proof of ownership (which is not required by the rules) from the contest form.

7. Publish contest schedule earlier- RAS/ Cochrane. Can we work out how to get BOD approval(excom?) before Fall meeting to permit publishing Nats schedule sooner?

KM is aware of the problem. Once a decision is made and before Board approval, sites and dates need to be published.

KM to talk to Linda and do a better job of pushing this.

8. Forward results to IGC more frequently. WE 9/17

This is handled by John Leibacher and is not really an RC issue. Only push for faster response has been from Bill Elliot. There is a cost associated with doing this. US Team Committee manages this.

9. Entry requirements – ranking extension Cochrane 6/11

Suggestion has been made to extend the PRL period to 5 years for Nationals rather than the current 3 years. Judgment of the committee is that 3 years is appropriate. Special circumstances can be dealt with by waiver, which should be provided cautiously with concern about precedent. Change to 5 years could allow someone to have flown one Sports class regionals 5 years earlier, and nothing since, and then fly in a Nationals. There is concern that this could create safety problems. No change.

10. USAFA entries .QT 3/11

There was discussion on whether or not to incorporate the 2010 waiver into the rules. USAF military licensing requirements should be sufficient. Military requirements satisfy the FAA. There was a suggestion to require the FAA written in addition to those requirements. Matticola was OK with this. We decided to leave as is. No change.

11. Revisit content of competition committee. Procedure to deal with pilot withdrawals. Internet access required of organizers. Sheppe contest report.

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CD is presently the chair of the competition committee. The competition committee is not a jury like the FAI system, it is just an advisory group for the CD. The current system generally works OK. Sometimes it's hard to find qualified committee members at a contest who are not contestants. No change.

It is recommended that internet access be available for the CD.

X to add to sanction application and to organizer checklist.

Contest withdrawals without notification: It's not much of a problem. Rude, but not something that requires a rule change. No change.

12. Rules Diagrams: Appendix diagrams should state that text has precedence if text and diagrams don't agree. (Seaborn)

QT to add note to diagrams.

13. On-Line Contest Infrastructure. Thanks to John Seaborn, Doug Easton, John Leibacher. 2011 Action Items? On-line entry, SSA Forms, SSA contest resources, PRL, US Team Rankings, Contest results reporting. Currently have two PRL lists. One is maintained by Doug Easton and is fed automatically by the SSA website results. One is maintained by John Leibacher and is (I think) subject to more manual processing. Both are useful.

There are some differences between the Easton and Leibacher PRL lists. Each list serves a purpose. No change in the current arrangement. The PRL list maintained by Leibacher is the official list.

14. Organizers to publish Winscore files in addition to flight logs and score sheets.

X to talk to Byars about the best way to capture the Winscore files and flight logs at the end of the contest. It may be possible to use the Winscore "send flight logs files" button to also send the Winscore files to the SSA website. Both wsc and xml files should be sent

15. Consider medicals .2P email 11/4, 2009 minutes

This suggestion was made last year. No change from last year's thinking. Here is the discussion from last year's minutes:

How often have we had medical-related problems at contests, especially problems which would have been prevented or caught by an FAA medical? There are concerns about mistrust of the FAA. Without hard data to show that requiring a medical would effectively stop pilots flying while medically unfit, the potential effect on participation is a major consideration. We're trying to increase participation. This would impose an additional cost. There are lots of negatives. Positives are unclear. No change.

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Participation

16. Contest participation – KM study 9/6

Why is participation down?

Cost, alternative means of flying for recognition (OLC), not as much family participation, some contests lack enough social events, pilots unwilling to make long drives, some contests are in the Spring, rather than Summer, when kids are off.

Two key issues: 1) Getting more pilots into racing at all levels, 2) How to get more pilots to Nationals

There are complaints that regional tasks are too short. There are complaints that regional tasks are too long.

How do we bring in older open class gliders who have dropped out? Handicap the open class?

Is the National participation problem due primarily to economy and to location?

Introduction of 18M class ultimately hurt participation in the Standard class.

We must build participation in regionals. Possibilities: Mentoring, allowing radio usage, allowing team flying. Do it by class.

We need to work on regionals first. The best way to grow Nationals is to first grow Regionals.

The best way to grow Regionals is to offer more mentoring and training, and lots of social events.

Our Nationals attendance is presently OK to maintain viable contests.

KM to permit radio use by waiver at regionals. There will be one frequency so everyone can hear everyone else. It will be plain language, no codes. Best if tried at smaller Regional contests first.

KM to assemble "blue-ribbon panel" to address issue of contest participation.

17. Time and Money- Crew/crewless pilots -BB

Pilots don't bring crew because of cost, and they don't want to have to entertain the crew.

Many pilots are willing to hire local crew. There is a suggestion that organizers find crews as a means to increase participation. Promote crewless-friendly contests.

KM to send summary to organizers about this.

Nationals Options

18. Entries- review World Class exemption for minimum number of entries. May affect Open and possibly Std as we go forward. KM 8/21

Remove 6.12.6.6. The minimum attendance requirements for the World Class were reduced when this class was introduced in order to build participation in WC. This has been in place for

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10 years and the class participation has not changed significantly over that time. There is no reason to continue this special treatment.

Rule Change.

Open Class: We understand that some older Open Class ships are no longer being raced. Can something reasonable be done to bring them back into racing? What should the adjustment be? 750 kg gliders? Need to bring in Nimbus 2, Arcus. Handicapping? We have no intention to reduce the minimum number of entrants required for a valid contest. What can be done to increase participation?

Standard Cass: There is a suggestion to handicap older Standard class gliders? It's unlikely. We may eventually have to combine Standard and 15M into a single class.

UH to contact Steve Leonard regarding a possible poll of all Open Class pilots regarding a possible handicap to account for max weight differences, or other ways to increase Open Class participation.

19. Number of days for valid Nationals – 09 Item 28– Poll – on track for 2011 implementation

The poll supported allowing 3 day nationals with max PRL ranking of 95.

Rule change as written.

20. Possible to move site during contest? – KM KM email 7/2

Do this by waiver only: Only for pre-planned and pre-approved situations, or truly extraordinary circumstances. Planning must be done beforehand with turnpoints, launch, etc. worked out.

Sailplanes/ Equipment

21. Adjust for wing loading on motorized gliders on no water days. SM via KM 7/3

There was a problem at Caesar Creek where field conditions limited water ballast. In stronger conditions, light gliders/pilots are at a sporting disadvantage to heavy gliders/pilots.

There was discussion about whether non-dumpable water ballast (taping dump valves closed) would be allowed as non-disposable ballast. RC intent is that non-dumpable ballast in wing or fuselage tanks, that are normally dumpable, is not considered non-disposable ballast. We don't want dump valves disabled or taped closed.

Rule change to add provision for restricted water to allow ballasting of all gliders up to the weight of the heaviest unballasted glider, in addition to current provision that allows no ballast. For a no-ballast day, the rule is unchanged.

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“No water contest rules” will not be changed – tail water is the only ballast allowed.

22. Flarm- poll comments, KM8/9, BB 8/18, QT8/14, LX 10/21

Issues: a) allow b) stealth mode c) add to equipment disclosure on entry form

There was lots and lots of discussion about Flarm and the very aggressive push by some in poll comments and email for immediate implementation of mandatory usage in some form.

The RC is unanimously in favor of allowing voluntary use of, and encourages use of, Flarm and compatible devices in 2011. RC will prepare a detailed plan related to implementation of such devices, including sporting considerations.

Rules: 6.6.3. Commercially produced anti-collision devices are allowed. Appendix: Give examples, e.g. Examples of anti-collision devices include Flarm and PCAS such as the Zaon MRX unit Appendix statement on flarm: Though Flarm is not required, the Rules Committee recommends the use of Flarm by every competition pilot. The potential safety benefit is large. This could be a suitable topic for a safety briefing.

23. Stealth mode (UH)

Issue: Should we impose stealth mode? Flarm helps pilots to see where others are, and could be useful competitively. Stealth mode limits this information but also limits collision avoidance; you don't see some gliders until 18 second before impact. UH talked to Flarm about designing a “stealth mode lite” that would limit information less drastically and be easier to enforce. Email, poll comments are divided: some pilots strongly in favor of mandating stealth mode to prevent computer leeching. Some equally opposed to any limitations. Not clear how useful it is in practice.

After a very long discussion, we decided it's not really a fairness, safety or cost issue, but an important philosophical one. If flarm leeching works it could change the contest experience a lot. We decided to take no action for now, but solicit pilot discussion and opinions once they have some experience with the device.

BB to poll. UH to keep working with flarm.

BB will be lead on position paper. (Position paper is already completed – great work BB!)

24. Kramer MIRA proposal. Kramer 10/26

This is an excellent proposal to be considered for implementation when units become available and experience is gained with their installation and use. There are concerns about practical difficulties of temporary installations and the rental process. MIRA as proposed will not be implemented in 2011. It is premature to implement MIRA (which requires mandatory use) before

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we have some experience with the actual units, which are not yet in production, and the rental and temporary installation process, which has never been done.

25. Revisit the prohibition on the in-flight use of electronic devices that report weather data, since we cannot police their use. Weather depictions are now commonly available on cell phones and GPS navigation receivers. Cockpit equipment- related to maintaining philosophy of how control of what equipment is permissible. UH 8/23

Safety issues and Sporting issues involved

Currently prohibited:

- radio use for team flying/ground info
- carrying FM walkie talkies for team flying
- cell phone use in the air; team flying or weather
- hypothetical thermal detectors
- gyros: Little mini-gyros which may be included in some new Nav computers
- satellite weather, e.g. Garmin GPS
- ADSB provided weather
- Flarm leeching: We'll have to monitor carriage of a second Flarm connected to the CN
What about PCAS, and ADS-B traffic displays which also can be used for leeching?

Radio use for team flying will be allowed by waiver in some regionals (see #16)

Gyros: Cloud flying must be prohibited.

Glider improvements (winglets, fuselage vents) vs electronics improvements. Why should we treat these two so differently?

Should we allow "in cockpit" weather? "In cockpit" weather might reduce luck factor? Heads-down time? Costs?

There is still no clear direction on what we should do differently.

We could possibly require pilots to sign a form promising to not use prohibited devices.

No change.

Will poll in 2011.

Start/ Finish

27. Multiple flight attempts. Poll, KM 9/1 , BB term paper on technical issues

The intent is to allow a second task attempt, after completion of the first flight, without requiring a landing after the first flight. Presently a landing is required before attempting the task a second time.

A landout on the second attempt would not invalidate the first flight.

We must make sure that a landout after crossing the finish, and on the way to the airport to land, after the first flight, doesn't count as a valid finish.

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There was discussion of having a minimum altitude at the finish of the first flight (ie.1000 agl) before the pilot can declare that he was starting a second flight. This was to insure that the pilot would have had sufficient altitude to cross the finish and land at the airport.

11.2.2.4 Task completion - If all turnpoints are valid, yield a scored distance (Rule 11.2.3) not less than the Standard Minimum Task Distance and the pilot obtained a scored start time, a finish time prior to finish closing, and either a) landed at the contest site or b) obtained a second, valid start (10.8.5) after finishing , then the pilot has completed the task. Otherwise the task is incomplete.

Appendix: The point of the qualification a,b, is that a pilot who crosses the finish cylinder or line, but lands short of the airport, does not complete the task and is scored for a landout.

Rule Change to allow second task attempt without landing. BB to tune the language to make sure a landout between the finish and the landing doesn't count as a finish.

28. Revisit language on max start height and finish height nomenclature. QT 5/20

After discussion, we agreed to clarify the "Maximum Start Height in MSL" language.

Rule text change to: "Maximum Start Height shall be communicated as its equivalent MSL altitude."

29. Rules footnote to emphasize limited altitude starts. Not sure who raised – QT? BB?

There needs to be a better explanation of rationale for limited start height on blue days. The point is to avoid a slow, long, gaggle climb to max height in a bubble, need to stick with that gaggle for a long time, and unfairness to late launchers. Piots need to be warned of head in the cockpit temptations watching the altimeter to stay below max height limit,

QT to work on appendix.

30. Safety finish- bigger cylinder- poll results favor permitting CD to declare radius up to 10 mi. Comments

Rule change to allow either 5 or 10 mi at CD choice. Otherwise, no change.

31. Frequency usage in area of airport. Contest freq/ CTAF. UH/BB/Wade 8/11

No change in rules. Current rules address this. If a landing frequency other than 123.3 is in use, pilots should switch before making the 4 mile and finish calls. The problem has not been with the rules but rather with poor implementation.

Additional guidance to CD in appendix by X.

32. 10.9.5.5 Should the time adjustment for a safety finish be based on the distance to the finish point or the finish circle? It is currently the finish point. (KM)

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Time adjustment to the “finish”, which is the “finish line” or the “finish cylinder” as appropriate.

Rule change/clarification.

Tasking/Flying

33. Day cancellation – We need better guidance and control over CD’s regarding the appropriate conditions and timing for cancelling the day. KM email 6/25

Rule change. The CD shall consult with the task advisors before canceling a task.

34. Continued flight after mid air collision. BB/QT 6/16,

Rule change. Pilots will be landed out at the point of the collision for scoring purposes.

35. Turn point incoming –exit headings- additional emphasis in guide to rules. BB 8/14, UH, QT

Add language to the appendix to caution CD against opposing legs. See topic #65 -- BB Critical Safety Checklist for organizers.

36. Tasking Guidance for CDs (emails Zimmerman 7/10, Sheppe Hobbs report, BB 8/10, KS 8/15, KS 8/16). Tasking in poor/uncertain weather. Recommended task types (MAT, TAT, AST). KS says drop AT, mostly TAT, MAT questionable/special weather. Risk of head-on collisions (what about ridge tasks, cloud streeting, steering turns)

No general support for dropping AT. Many pilots like the AT. Some prefer it.

There is no rule that all task types must be used. Rules don’t require that any specific task type be used. Also see #35, #65.

37. Allowing airspace in database as restricted but not active to be opened by CD as OK to fly in.

There were 5 or 6 penalties for flying over inactive restricted airspace at Fairfield this year. Options- permit availability on daily basis, remove from database if not meaningful problem, or leave as is.

5.6.2 currently gives the CD authority to allow flight through restricted areas that are not active. This should be stated on the task sheet. There is no change in the current intent that flight over an active restricted area or class B, C is prohibited.

38. Team Flying. Should we allow this? Regionals for mentoring? Nationals for US Team training/experience? (KM-SRA meeting at Caesar Creek)

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See 16, to be allowed by waiver.

39. Sports class tasking criteria. BB/UH 9/22 Should we explicitly mandate that Sports class tasks be set to Club class performance range? QT 11/1

This was in the rules at some time, but is no longer there.

No change – no mandate that club class performance be used to set tasks for Sports class.

40. Expanded tasking definition in Appendix. Sheppe Contest report.

QT will address this in the CD guide.

41. Have procedure for changing release area after launch started. Sheppe

There is no prescribed drop zone in the current rules. The drop zone can be changed.

Scoring

42. Scoring program error. KM 8/21 Winscore was not updated to latest distance point scoring in some contests- Sports Nats.

Winscore r3 9/16 is still using AGL start/finish, though now labeled as such. BB

This problem has been fixed.

43. Airport bonus- coordinates to use- QT 5/20

The rule is currently that a standard location is used. The intent is to use either the airport coordinates or the airborne point of furthest progress, whichever is greater. Leave rules alone.

QT to find out what Winscore is doing. In subsequent discussion we decided to treat all landouts the same and no longer use airport/turnpoint coordinates.

44. Long land out/Early finisher scoring- 09 Item 52, Poll- BB term paper

This will be changed to the new scoring method as approved by the pilots on the poll. It will be done for both Regionals and Nationals in order to make this easier for Byars to implement.

46. Prompt publishing of official results with SSA numbers – affects update of PRL QT/J Leibacher 10/5- 10/6

Is it possible to have Guy upload the Winscore files (both wsc and xml)?

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X to discuss with Guy.

47. Score to landing point or stopping point- Winscore may not conform to rule. QT 5/21

Rolling finish. Winscore scores time to the "landing point" rather than to the stopping point as specified in the rules.

X will mention to Guy.

Otherwise scorers can fix this by hand if necessary. It rarely comes up any more since the finish line is rarely used and rolling finishes are not common.

48. Review 5.2.1.1 which specifies the minimum scoring needed to become official. Sheppe Open Class report.

No change. The Hobbs situation was unusual.

49. Discuss a rewrite of scoring formulas over the winter. BB.

Good idea. The intent is simplification and to better understand and communicate the sporting implications of the scoring formulas.

BB will evaluate the present formulas with an eye towards simplification.

50. Revise scoring for pilots that land on airports. If pilot exceeds winners distance points and land on airport, get their distance points. Those that exceed winners distance points and land off airport get their speed points. Turiano. 9/28/10

We're not exactly sure what is being suggested, but RC is satisfied with the current airport bonus system and scoring formulas.

Class Issues

51. 20M 2 seat class KM e-mail re- Weeden suggestion 6/25 KS 9/12, BB 9/13

Paul Weeden suggested allowing team flying in the new 20M class. We will wait for a request for someone to hold a contest for 20M. We will deal with this then by waiver if necessary.

52. Club Class- Class growth- progression.

RC continues to encourage club class development by waiver. There has been limited participation so far. Participation at regional level has been limited to the southeast so far and does not justify adding a separate Club Class Nationals into the rules. We continue to be very concerned about negative effects on the Sports class.

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53. Class specific seeding for Club Class when scored within Sports

There is not sufficient participation yet for separate Club Class seeding other than that earned by flying the Sports Class. We are concerned about damage to the Sports Class by removing the mid-performance club class gliders out of the Sports Class. Perhaps we can set a target of 20 club class ships at the Sports Nationals.

54. Recognition of Club Class within Sports – parallel scoring.

This is OK if the scorer is willing to do this. It's not really a rules issue.

55. US Team- Club Class- Review limitation to Non FAI team members –Poll. Informational- this is a US Team call but we can advise.

RC supports removal of the pilot limitation as is planned by the US Team Committee.

56. Widen Club Class to allow lower and higher performance gliders. This is inconsistent with keeping Club Class close to WGC list. Would it increase participation? Franke /BB 9/23.

Lots of discussion. RC does not see that club class glider definition used by RC needs to be the same as that used by the Team Committee. RC encourages allowing lower performance gliders, as in other classes, but tasking should be targeted at IGC club class. (Note: IGC club class now extends up to Discus/24 Ventus/20/LS6) No consensus on what upper limit performance should be for defined club class ships. By waiver the organizer can now set the performance range at whatever they want (note that this is a change from the previous waiver that required the use of the US Team club class definition)

KM to communicate to organizers.

57. Handicap list- Schedule needs to be set for updates. ID gliders for review. UH

There are no known new models. There were no comments complaining about handicaps this year. UH thinks the current Standard Class gliders should be closer to .91 (presently they are .925)

58. Combined Std/15M/18M class – Cochrane 5/31, Paynter 10/9,10/10

No change. See 59 instead.

59. Allow multiple handicapped classes in regionals, defined by potentially overlapping handicap range or defined by tasking philosophy. - Cochrane 6/3 Maybe with water MS 6/2

Goal is increased participation, accommodating small regionals, and new pilots.

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Introduce the “Advanced Handicap Class” with handicap ranges that can overlap another handicap class. Separate either by pilot experience or handicap range.

Motivation: The combined std-15-18 is proving to be popular. However, there are still some holes in the system:

1. The older open gliders and duos still are poorly served. With a 15/18, it's weird to put them with 1-26 in sports. Putting them in with 18 lets “club” happen more easily.
2. Larger regionals seem to slide into too many classes with too few gliders, i.e. separate standard, 15, 18 with 6 gliders each rather than bigger combined classes.
3. For many regionals, 2-3 sports classes, “low performance”, “club” and “FAI” would make sense. Pilots may prefer real handicaps to combined std/15/18 at 2% (see #58).
4. Sometimes it makes sense to split based on tasking preference rather than handicap. It is worth separating the “beginner” feature of sports from the “handicapped racing” feature. BB tried this at a local contest – “pros” got a 3.5 hour task, “beginners” got 2.5 and everyone was happy. Some “beginners” had hot gliders, so handicap split wouldn't have worked.
5. A major objection to “all sports” is that we like to fly with water. Well, if pilots want to do it, why not let them?

Allow multiple sports class by waiver. Allow water for “advanced class” by waiver. Use handicap in table with no adjustment for weight. Note: Limited ballast is an option, but “no-ballast” still exists. The CD can call no ballast, or limited ballast.

KM to get the word out to organizers.

This is a “rules guide” for organizers that would like to try multiple sports classes or a sports class that allows water ballast:

5.0 >> ENTRIES

5.1 † Competition Type

Contest organizers will declare (on the Application for Sanction form) the competition type, which shall be one of the following:

5.1.1 † Regional competition

.....

5.1.2 † Super-Regional competition

.....

5.2 Multiple-class regional competition. Contest organizers may declare up to three distinct sports classes. Classes may be separated by handicap range, and such handicap ranges may overlap. (for example Class A: 0.95 and above; Class B: 1.1 – 0.90; Class C: 1.0 and below.) Classes may also be separated by tasking philosophy, i.e. a “pro” vs. “leisure” class with more challenging tasks in the former. The number and type of classes may be designated on the application for sanction form, or may be determined at the contest, once the entrants are known.

6.8.3 No-ballast rules

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Unless declared under 6.8.4, No-ballast rules shall apply.

6.8.3.1 *Disposable ballast is prohibited with the exception of disposable tail ballast.*

6.8.3.2 *Fixed ballast is permitted, but not more than an amount that brings the sailplane to its maximum handicap weight, as defined in the SSA Sailplane Handicap List.*

6.8.4 *Organizers may allow water ballast, and may do so for some sports classes (see 5.2). If a class is allowed the use of water ballast,*

6.8.4.1 *Gliders in this class shall be assigned handicaps based on their reference weight, without the usual adjustment for actual dry weight. That handicap will remain in place whether or not the pilot chooses to fly with water on a given day.*

6.8.4.2 *The CD retains the right to declare a no-ballast day, and this action shall not affect handicaps for “wet” gliders.*

60. Merge the Standard class with 15M class in US contests BB

No change. No serious consideration of this yet.

Errata

61. Rule 6.12.6.6 refers to 5.2.1.2 – should refer to 5.2.1.1.1 instead. Sheppe

Fix.

62. [RX]5.3.12 Entrants accepted into an oversubscribed contest may not change classes. – I thought we got rid of this. Is it needed? (KM)

X to investigate. This should be removed.

63. 10.9.1.2 The radio call of “finish” at one mile is gone. Was that intentional? (KM)

This should be put back in.

63a. 9.1 Safety briefing is currently “required”.

Rule change. Change to “strongly recommended”

Safety Topics

64. BB safety report.

See attached report

64a. Crash Procedures

Rule Change. Adopt the following.

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9.13 In the event of a crash or other incident that requires a competitor to abandon the task, the day results can be discarded. The CD may take this action directly, or pilots may petition under this section and 11.1.3, which requires that each competitor be given a "fair opportunity to compete." This rule should only be invoked when a really serious event has occurred, and pilot help is really needed. Examples include helping to locate a downed pilot, or helping with rescue efforts, either from the air or after landing nearby.

65. Critical Safety Checklist. BB Topics

KM to send copy of this to CDs. Describe in safety talks at early contests (Seniors, Perry)

Rule Change -- Make Safety Checklist part of the appendix to the rules.

Communications With Pilots

66. Getting Our Message Out

It is notable that this year's poll had the best participation in years. Well done all- especially BB. BB is doing a good job with Contest Corner. Other Ideas.

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2010 BB Contest Safety review summary and conclusions

The big picture on this year's safety review comes down to two issues: Midairs and tightening up procedures. Midairs will be helped somewhat by Flarm, but a bit more concern in tasking will help. My main recommendation for both issues is that we implement a **“Critical safety checklist”**

Agenda item: Discuss why we're having sloppy procedures, wisdom of “critical safety checklist,” and contents of the list.

This is like the “critical assembly checklist” but for contests. As part of the rules Appendix, we disseminate a very short (2 pages) set of critical safety related rules and procedures. CD and CM can refer to it to make sure they've got the critical items covered; pilots can refer to it if they feel critical items are not covered. Here's my best shot at it.

Critical Contest Safety Procedures Checklist

This is like the “critical assembly” check, a short condensed list of the most important safety-oriented contest procedures. This list is written to enhance general awareness of critical safety procedures, and to help organizers and pilots all make sure they happen. Disclaimer: Omission of an item does not mean it's not important.

Ground and Tow operations

- Is there a daily safety briefing as required by rules? (9.1)
- Are spectators, dogs, children adequately kept off the runway and away from dangerous areas?
- Do procedures clearly define the times and places when people and cars use runways (to grid), and times when airplanes use runways and people and cars do not?
- Is the critical assembly check with signed wingtape procedure in effect?
- Are towropes in good condition, with Tost rings (6.10.2)?
- Are procedures in place to ensure that there are no people, spectators, objects, cars, in front of launching gliders?
- Do towplane patterns ensure that ropes don't drag in dangerous places?
- Are there clearly established relight procedures, including radio calls/frequency, pattern, landing spot, and recovery procedure?
- Are there clearly established finish procedures, including pattern, landing, runway-clearance and recovery?
- Is a “safety box” in place? (9.8)
- Critical procedures such as the above should be written, printed, distributed and on the contest website, and then covered in briefings. Do not rely only on verbal briefings.

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Start and Finish

- Is start height guidance followed--at least 500' below cloudbase or top of dry thermals? (10.8.5.1.2)
- Is the finish type appropriate to airport and situation?
 - A cylinder with high minimum altitude is advised when there is a) poor terrain around the airport b) limited landing space c) power or other glider activity during launch and landing d) arrivals from many directions (MAT tasks).
 - If a finish line is in use, head-on traffic between flying finishers' landings and rolling finishes should be avoided. There should either be separate runways, or the final leg should be upwind.
 - If a finish line is in use, finishers will cross the wrong way if there is any doubt. The final leg should not approach at right angles to the line.
- Radio.
 - Is the procedure in the rules being followed: a) All on 123.3, or b) Switch from alternate frequency after tow release, and/or switch to it before 4 mile call.
 - Does the CD or delegate monitor the radio and coordinate with power traffic during launch and landing?

Task Guidelines

- The CD should use Advisers to assess the safety and fairness of the task, especially in the 5-10 minutes before the task opens. (10.8.1.2)
- When possible, avoid tasks which lead to head-on traffic, especially with cloudstreets or geography which concentrates traffic, poor visibility, and in assigned tasks or assigned part of MAT tasks.
- When possible, send different classes on separate tasks to reduce gagging.
- When possible, the task should be set across ridges in very weak ridge lift, and the task should keep pilots away from poor terrain in weak or low thermal lift (Hobbs caprock, Uvalde hill country, etc.). Beware of overly large turn areas or unrestricted MATs in such conditions.
- It is better to set A, B, C tasks on the ground than to call entirely new tasks in the air. (Most flight computers allow entry of multiple tasks.) If tasks must be changed, try to minimize reprogramming time. Leave adequate time between task change and start open.
- Spratt guidelines of 2500' AGL to launch, 3300' AGL to start, should be followed unless there is a good reason.

Recourse

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If a pilot feels that important safety-related procedures are not being followed, he or she should:

1. Talk to the CD, CM, contest committee (3.14) and task advisers. Please be polite, we're all interested in safety.
2. Explain the problem to other pilots and get them to talk to the CD, CM, contest committee, and task advisers.
3. Contact the SSA contest committee or chairman (Ken Sorenson).
4. File a protest. (See rule 9.0 and 11.1.3 as well as the rules describing the particular situation.)
5. *Don't fly.* Remember, *the final responsibility for safety always lies with the pilot in command* (FAA, SSA rule 9.3). Nobody ever "makes" you do something unsafe!
6. CD: Rule 9.0 trumps all the other rules and traditions. It is never the case that the rules force you to do something unsafe, or prohibit you from addressing the development of an unsafe situation.

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2010 BB Contest Safety review

1. Midairs

We had midairs at Parowan and Uvalde this year. We also had a 15 foot miss at Parowan. There was a midair at Uvalde in 2008, and a second 15 foot miss. With no reporting mechanism, there are likely other near misses.

2 of the 5 cases happened with assigned tasks; 2 involved joining a thermal, while 3 involved head-on cruising. 4 out of 5 cases involved traffic going in opposing directions to and from a turnpoint.

It does seem that we could reduce these incidents somewhat with a bit more consideration to tasking. ASTs encourage gaggles, and concentrate traffic. "Out and return" turnpoints, or turn areas that line up with geography or likely streeting to produce "out and return" flight paths are particularly dangerous. Poll had many comments on this.

Safety talks may be getting a bit lax. Thermal joining and the dangers of out and return task legs need constant emphasis.

2. Procedures

Some other parts of contest-procedure wisdom seem to be getting lax. Lots of the "little things" that we know how to do right are not being done right. This is natural in the post-Spratt era we have a lot of newer CDs. I've heard the following complaints

Hobbs:

Tow into rain rather than adjust release point

Task not changed though first turn blown up, no call to advisers

Task set in weak weather to unlandable terrain

Uvalde:

Spectator standing in front of glider, injured when tow started

Logan:

Radios on 123.3, CD not monitoring Unicom. Finish complaints

3. Reports:

R10 S. Pilot hit operations director on landing. Taxiway, landing after day called off, Ops D was fixing grid flags.

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R9S. Pilot in Zuni lost elevator and most of aileron at 9000'. Managed to land anyway with slight damage. "Control rods containing ring had been placed on incorrectly, and the spot weld popped" Does not mention if positive control check was done.

PW5/126 One PW-5 pilot experienced a disconnected aileron on the grid. It was detected during the preflight control check and resolved without incident.

R10 N. Pilot broke landing gear on off field landing - Standard Nats. Glider broke landing gear on off field landing in crop circle

Open Nats. Glider landed gear up on highway

Seniors: Damaged landing gear on hard landing.

4. Emails

... a near mid-air I had at the Parowan 2010 Sports Nationals. If you go to the DAY6 IGC files and look for these logs: 06LC4541.IGC (a Discus 2A) and 06LC4131.IGC (a Ventus) you will see another near mid air coming out of the first turn. Our paths intersected with about 15 feet vertical separation. Fortunately, I saw the converging glider at the last moment and made a severe pitch down to miss him. He never saw me...

We were lucky nobody got hurt and no wrecks last day at Hobbs, only because of extreme luck plus some of us abandoning the task. Continuing to tow into rain, not changing the task when it was already blown up in the 2nd turn area before launch, not asking the advisors if it was safe and fair, Not Good. Task took us under T-storms with low bases and over unlandable terrain, though there was a landing on a 200 ft² oil pad (Nimbus 4) and between posts on oil-pad access road (D2 I think) and a highway (DB).

There was a fixation on the "assigned drop zone" which makes no sense when there's ample lift elsewhere and non-VFR in the drop zone. Not Good.

I'm still bitter about the last day task at Hobbs- right into a thunderstorm. The CD was just as stubborn as Hannes at Tonopah in 2002. Dangerous and foolish.

During one of the practice days at Uvalde I witnessed a glider being towed down the runway with the canopy fully open. I found out later that a woman was standing in front of the glider and was knocked to the ground and injured. ...

Poll safety comments:

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

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Set some safety standards for when a contest day needs to be deemed unsafe. At 2500 AGL (Max Altitude achieved by a contest pilot), a CD should not be able to send pilots into rough terrain... With the recent collision at Uvalde this past 15m Nats, there should be some consideration given into a parameter to be set where turn areas may not be within a certain degree or angle from each other to prevent head-ons...

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

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

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

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

Steering turns as in uvalde should not be an in and out causing 200 mph head to head traffic. How the task comity let this go i do not

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

...I believe a quick radio check between the tow pilot and glider should be accomplished as the rope is hooked up. The tow pilot calls, JJ this is blue tow---how do you read? Assuming I hear this call I respond ----Loud and clear. I now know who is towing me and that I can communicate with him should the need arise. We have had 4 fatalities in

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region 11 in the last 10 years that could have been prevented if the tow pilot and glider pilot had simply established radio communication before starting the tow. Clem Bowman was one of them flying in the standard class nats at Minden and Clem was on the wrong frequency when the line crew called RELEASE after Clems stab fell off while at start of takeoff. I believe the above recommendations reflect good airmanship and I would like to see them in the rules.

This years collision at Uvalde was probably partially the result of a task course that resulted in conflicting traffic.