

2015 SSA Rules Committee Meeting

November 14, 2015 – MSA Clubhouse, Reedsville, PA

Agenda with Minutes Included

1 7:45 AM MSA Clubhouse

1.1 2016 Assignments and Schedule (Group – 10 minutes)

Chair	QT
Secretary	9B
Rules Writer	X
Rules Editor	QT
Rules Change Summary	XM (not attending)
Opinion Poll Writer	UH
Opinion Poll Publisher	AA / UH / QT (AA not attending)
Ranking List	John Leibacher (not attending)
Flarm Liaison to IGC/BGA/Flarm	UH
Winscore Liaison	9B
SSA Website Liaison	9B

Date	Item	Who
Nov 22	Meeting minutes to committee	9B
Nov 29	Minutes comment period ends	Committee
Dec 6	Final meeting minutes published on SSA website	9B / QT
Dec 6	Completed draft of all rules and appendix changes to committee, xref links vetted	X
Dec 7 - 20	Rules change review period	Committee
Dec 29	Rules change summary published on SSA website	XM / 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
Jan 24 – Feb1	National FAI rule vetting	9B
	National Sport rules vetting	QT
	Regional FAI rules vetting	XM
	Regional Sport rules vetting	UH
Feb 1	Final rule documents vetted	Committee
Feb 7	Final rules changes to SSA for BOD (Feb 19)	QT / X
Mar 1	Rules published on SSA website	QT
May, July	RC election announcement	QT
8/22	2016 pilot poll questions to writer	Committee
9/6	Draft poll to committee	UH
9/19	Poll to Aland for publication	UH
10/1-10/18	Poll and Election	Chair
Nov	RC Meeting	Chair

1.2 Safety Report Review (10 minutes)

No safety report yet from BB. Incidents we know of:

- Motorglider-related
 - Perry, Arcus failed air start and landout
 - New Castle, failed air start and crash with severe injury
 - New Castle, low air start over unlandable terrain
 - Fairfield, loss of control after start on grid when #2, damage but no injury
- Other
 - Perry, crash after finish off field
 - Hobbs, crash after finish next to alternate runway
 - Nephi?

1.3 Motorglider Ground Start Guidance (5 minutes)

Recommendation: X to add Guidance in appendix with respect to procedures.

1.4 Participation Statistics Review (X - 10 minutes)

Background: Participation in regionals seems to be way down this year (315 vs 438 last year).

Where and why?

Recommendation: UH and QT to define the idea of "OLC class" in Regionals – a more casual “on-ramp” to racing with opportunity to educate and mentor – (e.g. less pressure to fly every day, opportunities to extend flights, pilot experience handicaps, etc.). UH to discuss with R2 organizers to conduct trial, develop concept.

1.5 Poll Results Review (QT - 10 minutes)

Response statistics:

	Rules Committee Election (Seeded Pilots)	Pilot Opinion Poll (Seeded Pilots)	UST C Election (SSA Membership)
2015	176	178	
2014:	162	157	228
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 (additional, "pivot-table" detail from poll, not personally identifiable):

- **Flarm: 78% of respondents (137) report using**
 - 94% among those reporting they flew a National
 - 73% of those only reporting flying a Regional
- **Mandatory Flarm in Nationals (who reported flying in a national)**
 - 50% mandatory
 - 19% organizer choice
 - 29% pilot choice
- **Stealth in Nationals (only pilots who reported flying in a Nationals in 2015)**
 - 43% want Stealth mode mandatory by rule
 - 50% want another, non-mandatory treatment of Stealth mode by rule
 - 10% want Stealth prohibited by rule
 - 27% want pilot option to use Stealth mode or not
 - 13% want organizer option to require, prohibit or make pilot option
- **Stealth in Regionals (only pilots who reported flying a Regionals in 2015)**
 - 30% mandatory
 - 26% organizer choice
 - 13% prohibited
- **40% of respondents report they like Flarm "radar"**
 - 34% for 2015 National participants
 - 35% of 2015 National participants dislike
- **76% Favor rules simplification, but comments indicate not unilaterally by RC**
- **62% of pilots reporting they fly Std Favor handicapping Std Nationals**
 - 6/7 who flew HH prefer handicapping
- **70% of respondents do not want to retire the National Trophies**

1.6 Should PAGC be treated as a National for Seeding Calculation?

Only affects one pilot (Canadian) who is not currently registered for Srs, Nephi or Perry
Cole Bill PAGC: 73.42144 62.78144

1.6.1 Proposal – no action

Recommendation: No action – PAGC is not a US National Contest, it should be treated as other international contests.

2 8:30 AM – Infrastructure

2.1 Juniors Contest Subsidy (QT)

Background: This year 6 rebates were issued with one pilot using two and with again a number of comments that it was the deciding factor to attend.

Year	Rebates	Cost
2013	5	\$2,303
2014	5	\$3,286
2015	6	\$4,118

2.1.1 Proposal: Continue as per 2015

Recommendation: Approve – continue subsidy.

2.2 Trophies (QT/TO)

Background: Poll strongly supports not retiring trophies. Process is underway to revise the handling of trophies.

Recommendation: Trophy committee to take preferences from poll and come up with an implementation plan. Trophies will be presented at the contest on display at the convention and TBD as regards being held by the winners.

Comment: Trophy committee being re formed- QT and Jay Daniels handling.

2.3 Contest Fees (QT)

Background: Organizers need to cover their fixed costs, but contestants are unhappy when there is a fixed entry fee and bad weather. Does current rule give enough options to organizers? E.g. Entry fee could include some aerotows, the rest @ \$\$

2.3.1 Proposal: Allow organizers to offer "x non-refundable tows in entry fee"

Recommendation: Allow organizers to raise fixed fee and/or fixed number of tows to ensure breakeven in a washout. X to craft rule modification.

2.4 Winscore/Web Enhancements/Tracker (9B)

Background: Remote scoring works well but is very tedious. No progress has been made in 5 years to advance Winscore to implement more automated scoring. Guy reports that this year he expects to have some time. SeeYou does this well but does not support all our rules.

Recommendation: QT to set up goals and steps to get Guy more exposure to scorer needs by scoring a number of contests and agree on a development plan for WinScore.

3 9:00 AM –Minor Rules Modifications/Errata (Max 10 min ea)

3.1 Seeding for teams missing from FAI Regional rules (QT)

Background: 5.3.2 language regarding teams is not present

3.1.1 Proposal: Rationalize language for FAI Reg, Sports Nat and Sports Reg 5.3.2

Recommendation: Approve. Add language to FAI regional rules re: teams – From Sports nats and regionals 5.3.2. X to craft rules modifications.

3.2 Revise email log rule 10.10.2.1.1 to allow email (QT)

Background: Obsolete in the light of remote scoring and ubiquitous email/internet

3.2.1 Proposal: Delete email language; Also specify that logs may be delivered any way acceptable to the scorer, and that an IGC file on a USB stick or SD Card is always allowed.

Recommendation: Approve

3.3 Fix start time reporting language to say always at the pilot's option (SN)

Background: Clarification suggested by X after deadline last year

Start time reporting is optional at the pilot's discretion. If reported start times must be accurate within two (2) minutes. Deliberate mis-reporting of start times can be penalized as Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

3.3.1 Proposal: Approve

Recommendation: Approve. X to craft rule modification

3.4 Use of multiple logs / logger with long interval to avoid penalties (X, KM et. al)

Background: Last year after the deadline X proposed adding rules that limit the ability of a pilot to avoid a penalty by carrying/submitting a second log with a long fix interval (based on an incident in Finland)

3.4.1 Proposal: Require that any log used for scoring use a logging interval <= four seconds (14 hours for a CAI-10)

Recommendation: Approve. X to craft rule modification

3.5 Revise motorglider airfield bonus rule (X)

Background: Suggestion by X too late to include last year.

10.10.3.4.1 The flight log shows that the motor was started within two (2) miles of the published coordinates of an eligible airfield (Rule 10.10.3.2) and at least 1000' above that airfield's elevation. ~~Distance from airfield to be determined based on the FAA official airport coordinates or by the CD.~~

3.5.1 Proposal: Leave as is. Current wording accommodates bad published coordinates or old photo point coordinates

Discussion underscored that the intent is to accommodate pilots' good-faith efforts to get within 2 miles of an airport at a suitable altitude to attempt an engine start and/or make an appropriate pattern and land, rather than concern them with where on the airport the turnpoint might be (versus proper entry point for a pattern). In addition, intent is to allow flexibility should pilots have loaded in their computers a differently located, published airport location from another official source.

Recommendation: Leave as currently written – allow discretion for good-faith efforts to get within 2 mi of airport at a safe altitude.

3.6 Revise wording relating to obtaining handicaps

Background: Entrant last year did not understand who was responsible, created fire drill.

11.4.1.2 For a handicapped competition class, each sailplane is assigned a Handicap Factor from the SSA Handicap List. (~~A Handicap Factor for a sailplane not listed can be obtained~~ [An entrant who plans to fly with a sailplane not listed can obtain a handicap](#) by contacting the SSA Contest Committee at least 30 days prior to the scheduled competition.)

3.6.1 Proposal: Approve

(Responsibility is the pilot's to obtain a handicap)

Recommendation: Approve. X to craft rule modification.

3.7 Task claim form submission (X)

Background: Wording improvement – make words in parens a separate sentence

11.2.2.2 † If the flight documentation includes a Task Claim form under the provisions of [Rule 10.5.1.3](#), task evaluation is based on this form, which may not be altered once submitted (but a subsequent Task Claim can be submitted under the provisions of [Rule 11.2.2.7](#))

3.7.1 Proposal: Approve

Recommendation: Revised wording adopted as written. X to craft rule modification.

3.8 Revised Task claim form submission (Sports Nats)

Background: 10.5.1.2.2 11.2.2.7 confused the scorer

3.8.1 Proposal: Clarify that that the competitor has 24 hours only from the time of original submission to make changes to his/her task claim.

Recommendation: Approve. X to craft wording

3.9 Status of scores (X)

Background: Add wording to clarify score status is a class (not contest) attribute

11.9.2 Once flight documentation for all [class](#) entrants is received by the Scorer, the status of a competition day becomes Unofficial. Scores are subject to change due to analysis of flight documentation, imposition of penalties, resolution of protests, etc.

3.9.1 Proposal: Change

Recommendation: Approve. No point in holding uninvolved classes Unofficial needlessly. X to craft rule modification.

3.10 Critical assembly check revision R10.2.1, A10.2.1 (KM)

Background: See KM email.

3.10.1 Proposal: Delete CAC partner reference in 10.2.1. Revise wording of A10.2.1 to reflect best practices wrt CAC. Emphasize importance for non-automatic control hookup gliders at mandatory meeting. Require announcement of CAC mark contest policy at mandatory meeting.

Recommendation: Approve. Leave to organizers to set specific policy and procedure. X to craft rule modification and appendix wording.

3.11 Worst Day Score Adjustment

Background: Has not gained any traction.

3.11.1 Proposal: Delete (Simplify), can be used by waiver

Recommendation: Delete – not ever used.

3.12 Last Start Time

Background: Has not gained any traction. Scoring has been an obstacle, but also little interest from pilots, despite efforts to gain trial by RC.

3.12.1 Proposal: Delete (Simplify), can be used by waiver

Recommendation: Delete

3.13 Control Fix selection at Turnpoint (Sports Nats Protest)

Background: Subject of protest at Sports Nationals, lack of specificity in rule.

3.13.1 Proposal: Revise 11.2.2.3.1 to reference 10.5.3.2 instead of 10.5.3 and 11.2.2.3.2 to add language to specify that nearest approach fix (with best distance if multiple exist) is used if 10.5.3.3 applies. Maybe 10.5.3.3 should move to 11.2.2.3

Recommendation: Add the word 'except' to the end of 10.5.3.3 – Change "At" to "Within" to verify that scores can only be calculated on fixes within a valid turnpoint. X to craft rule modification.

3.14 Motorglider interval before start after engine shutdown (XM)

Background: Suggests last word be changed to "shutdown." Also note that current rules proscribe engine start typically between 1000 and 2800 AGL. Note: After engine start time limit seems redundant with 10.6.3.2.3 limit.

10.6.3.2.2 Engines must be shut down no higher than an altitude specified by the CD, which shall normally be 800' higher than the aerotow release altitude.

10.6.3.4.2 † Pilots in the air may start their engine within three (3) miles of the home airfield and not below 1000' AGL, then follow the self-launch procedures of [Rule 10.6.3.2](#). A pilot who makes use of this option is not eligible for a start time until twenty (20) minutes after engine start

3.14.1 Proposal: Remove 800' above release altitude restriction for air starts

Recommendation: Not Approve – no change. Making the proposed change leads to a litany of scenarios where fairness to non-motored gliders can become a significant issue. Attempting to address each scenario with additional rules or restrictions leads to too much complexity and confusion. Even for turbos, 800' is more than adequate.

3.14.2 Proposal: Change 20 minutes after engine start to engine shutdown.

Recommendation: Change to 15 minutes after engine shutdown. X to craft rule modification.

4 12 Noon – More Challenging Issues (20 min ea)

4.1 Flarm and Stealth Mode

Background: Difficult problem

4.1.1 **Proposal: Requiring Flarm becomes organizer option (like ELT)**

Flarm adoption is continuing to progress steadily – particularly at nationals. It provides a network effect of safety but its function is not 100% reliable due to a host of issues related to low power RF devices where antenna placement is important. We want to encourage maximum penetration of good faith efforts of pilots to adopt Flarm but not disqualify pilots if units fail to operate as expected.

Issue: Infrastructure issue – sole source vendor, product support issue (ship to Switzerland, cost, no exchange).

Recommendation: Organizer option to mandate for Flarm carriage for 2017 and by pre-packaged waiver in 2016 with pre-announcement prior to PED – also need to specify in advance what constitutes an operating Flarm unit, how to test for proper operation, how to deal with failures and reports of improperly operating units.

9B and X to draft language.

4.1.2 **Proposal: Stealth required in nationals if carried. Organizer option in regionals**

Long and open discussion of pros and cons culminating in the meeting's only split vote, 3-2. 9B (Blackburn) requested his strong opposition and 'no' vote be reflected in the minutes. XM (Smith - not attending) provided "no" vote prior to meeting in writing. XM prefers to keep as organizer option for another year as Elmira is the only Stealth mandatory datapoint.

Recommendation: Provisional decision to mandate Stealth mode for Nationals only. Revisit in January. Organizer option for ANY Flarm mode at Regionals – mandatory unrestricted Flarm, Pilot Option or mandatory Stealth.

UH to coordinate with IGC/UK efforts to revise Stealth mode to increase level of situational awareness and flexibility of action for high-altitude, high-speed, head-to-head traffic conflict scenarios (common in strong western conditions). 60-seconds of lead time was suggested as a target. Provide access to FlarmID or FlarmNet CN in order to preempt conflict and/or coordinate evasive action in these scenarios.

4.2 Cellphones, weather, AHRS, other technology et al (multiple)

Background: After the notice of intent to consider removing restrictions, the expected vigorous debate on this did not occur and is interpreted as a lack of getting mind share in the pilot community.

4.2.1 **Proposal: Explicitly approve the use of cellphone etc. technology to report position to the Sailplane Tracker. Explicitly continue to forbid the use (but not carriage) of all other currently forbidden equipment / applications.**

A long discussion focused on frequency and impact of potential increases in cockpit information – costs, benefits, impact on safety, fairness, enjoyment and detection/enforcement practicality and burden on organizers in the face of rapidly changing consumer and aviation technology landscapes. Strong agreement that since cloud flying is an FAR violation, it should remain prohibited and dealt with harshly. Egregious violations can often be detectable based on IGC files (e.g. climbing thousands of feet into cloud so as to cross a blue hole).

Recommendation: Allow cell phones to use the tracker app - subject to validating sufficient (10-15 min) delay in displaying track data. Retain rules to prohibit use (but not carriage) of prohibited equipment. X to craft language

4.3 Handicap language is confusing between classes (email to P3)

Background: When and how handicaps apply is confusing e.g.:

	FAI Handicapped	Sports
SMTD for a given pilot	Max (Raw SMTD, Hdcp SMTD)	Hdcp SMTD miles
Requirement to have complete task (R 10.3.1.4, 11.2.2.4)	Max (Raw SMTD, Hdcp SMTD)	Hdcp SMTD miles
Valid Day (R 11.1.3)	Raw SMTD miles	Hdcp SMTD miles
Speed/Dist Score Based on	Hdcp miles flown	Hdcp miles flown

4.3.1 Proposal: Simplify. All distances should be expressed as Handicapped SMTD. For non-handicapped classes the handicap factor == 1.

Recommendation: Adopt proposal as written. X to craft rule modification.

4.4 Standard class handicapping

Background: Poll Supports, but may cannibalize Club if on same side of country. As

4.4.1 Proposal: Declare Standard to be a handicapped class with a unique handicap system that is suited wrt water/no-water(or that it is a no-water class). Mandate that Club and Standard be on opposite sides of country each year.

Recommendation: Approve - with guidance to not locate Club and Standard Nationals in geographic proximity, if possible. Handicap committee needs to support additional handicap list – “Hankdicapping”. X to craft rule modification, handicap list change and coordinate.

4.5 FAI Handicapping (KM)

Background: Address dissatisfactions with current situation

4.5.1 Proposal: All pilots declare a maximum flying weight before the contest begins. This weight would be less than or equal to their maximum gross weight and greater than or equal to their dry weight. Their handicap throughout the contest is fixed and set based upon that declared weight. They can choose to fly lighter on any given day, but would be scored based upon the initial declared weight. If the pilot thinks it will be a strong contest he can

declare high weight. If you think it will be weak you declare a lower weight. You are not allowed to ballast above the declared weight.

Longer term issue: Current formula for adjusting handicap by weight is not accurate to polar behavior. Handicap committee needs to develop formulae that are more accurate.

Recommendation: Allow by waiver – use Truckee waiver request as model.

4.6 Narrow Club handicap range, match UST eligibility

Background: Simplification. Move towards the list of Club National eligible gliders being the same as the gliders for UST selection (except for lower performance ships allowed to fly in Club Nats with handicap limit). Waiting to hear from USTC.

Proposal: Set a narrower handicap range: 1.02—0.898, effective 2016. This effectively eliminates 13.5m gliders from Club but leaves them a home in Sports.

Recommendation: Approve - 1.02 (Std Libelle) to 0.898 (LS-6) agrees with recommendation of USTC. UH to publicize so that affected pilots can plan. No 2-seat gliders. Motorgliders permitted. X to craft language

4.7 No dopples in US Club

Background: Make Club converge towards FAI/IGC

4.7.1 Proposal: Eliminate two seaters from US Club

Recommendation: Eliminate 2-seaters from eligibility in Club Class. X to craft language.

4.8 Shorter Nationals

Background: Poll asked if more would attend shorter nationals.

4.8.1 Proposal: No change.

4.8.2 Proposal: Require any 9 day national to include a reserve day to be used if needed to get a 4 day contest.

Recommendation: Allow as an organizer option with a strong recommendation to include a reserve 9th day to be used only if needed to secure a 3rd or 4th contest day. X to craft language.

4.9 2-place Teams Permitted in Open Class (X, G)

Background: Request is to allow two seeded pilots flying in a two-place glider in Open Class to be scored as a team, with the same seeding constraints wrt entry priority and resulting seeding that apply to teams in Sports Class.

4.9.1 Proposal: Approve, both pilots must fly every day.

Recommendation: Allow. X to craft language

5 3:15 PM Waiver Requests

5.1 Nephi

Background: Multiple requests. See waiver request

5.1.1 Proposal re Item 1: Approve mandatory Flarm – Require Stealth

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Approve (subject to 7.1.2 decision requiring stealth mode) – subject to additional considerations after UH confers with UK/IGC Flarm Stealth mode modification efforts.

5.1.2 Proposal re Item 2: Deny

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Deny – allowing foreign pilots is the whole reason for the rule

5.1.3 Proposal re Item 3: Approve

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Approve in principle – subject to applying penalty for violations and some provision for pilots to weigh on the ramp prior to pilots' meeting (or similar).

5.1.4 Proposal re Items 4 and 5: Approve

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Approve

5.1.5 Proposal re Items 6: Approve

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Recommend reserving 12 slots for open and standard – fill remaining slots by seeding. Extend launch time window to accommodate more 15M gliders if necessary.

5.2 R11 Truckee

Background: Wants to handicap FAI differently

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Approve

5.3 2017 Mifflin Sports Nationals

Background: Wants 9 days with reserve day if needed to make 3 or 4 days.

5.3.1 Proposal: Approve, also consider as a condition of all 9 day nationals.

Recommendation to Contest Committee Chair: Approve by new rule for 2016