October 19, 2017 5:33 PM

Percentages usually do not add up to 100% because multiple selections can be made on many questions. Also, some questions are not answered by all survey submitters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Categories</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary of detailed data representing All respondents.</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.0 Demographics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 What National contests did you fly in this season</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports: Reedsville</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std/15M/Open: Cordele</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club: Hobbs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-26: Midlothian</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18M: Uvalde</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Do you plan on participating in the 20M Class Multi Seat Nationals planned to be held in Reedsville, PA in May, 2018?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 How many Regional contests did you fly in this season?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoreThan6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2.0 FLARM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Does the glider you typically fly in contests have a FLARM unit?</td>
<td>Yes 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Do you think that FLARM should be mandatory at National contests?</td>
<td>Yes 68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Do you think that FLARM should be mandatory at Regional contests?</td>
<td>Yes 42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Should the FLARM Stealth mode be allowed at US contests?</td>
<td>Yes 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4c Please use the comment box to provide other views you have on the use of FLARM in contests:</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.0 Tracking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 What type of tracking equipment is used in your glider?</td>
<td>None 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spot 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>InReach 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CellPhoneTracker 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 To what degree should the RC, (SSA Rules Committee), by the use of rules, regulate tracking?</td>
<td>A 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Do not allow except for safety purposes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Allow, but only under specific guidelines (please comment).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Allow without restriction. (Real time tracking information is becoming prevalent in contests outside of the US).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Mandate soon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/surveyresults.php
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2c</td>
<td>Comments on your views regarding specific guidelines for tracking:</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>New Technology/Communications</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Have you had the opportunity to use cell phone weather applications in the cockpit as per last year's rule change?</td>
<td>Yes 14%, No 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Comments on any available technology that you would like to be newly allowed in aircraft as per the contest rules:</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Consideration of Adoption of FAI Contest Rules</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There has been much discussion on adopting FAI Contest Rules. The following questions seek to identify the racing community’s desires in this area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adopting FAI Contest Rules: In general a move to FAI rules would at a minimum have the following effects:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bring the US in line with rules used in contests in a majority of the soaring world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Enable US pilots to be familiar with the rules they will face in international competitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Decrease points awarded to lone finishers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increase points penalty for lone landouts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Enable US contests to be scored using software platforms other than Winscore.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Almost certainly will result in more gaggle flying during tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Will result in more landouts during tasks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eliminate starting out the top of the start cylinder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eliminate the Modified Assigned Task, MAT, from US contests.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Do you favor a wholesale move to FAI rules?</td>
<td>Yes 29%, No 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1c</td>
<td>Comments on a wholesale move to FAI rules:</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Do you favor a gradual adoption of FAI contest rules?</td>
<td>Yes 37%, No 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2c</td>
<td>Comments on a gradual adoption of FAI contest rules:</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Do you favor retaining US contest rules as separate from FAI rules.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5.3c Comments on retaining US contest rules as separate from FAI rules:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.0 Changes to Start Rules:

#### 6.1 Starting out of the top of the cylinder

There has been some discussion about eliminating starting out of the top of the start cylinder. Some arguments for elimination are:

- Starting out the top is not used in FAI contests.

Arguments in favor of starting out the top include:

- Reduces gagglng
- Especially in West Coast contests, allows competitors to get to a more favorable altitude while remaining within landing distance of the home airfield before venturing out into possible hazardous/unlandable terrain/wx.
- Adds new tactics to the task.

#### 6.1.1 Do you favor eliminating starting through the top?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.1.1c Comments on eliminating starting through the top:

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.1.2 If start out the top is retained, do you favor retaining (yes) or eliminating (no) the rule only giving distance credit for starts in the front half of the cylinder?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pros of front half rule:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May reduce starters from the back flying through gagglles near the front.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cons of front half rule:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Front half boundary varies based on where in the first turn cylinder the pilot actually turns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Front half is hard to estimate from the cockpit - no glide computer depicts it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adds complexity to the rules.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.1.2c Comments on retaining starting through the top front half rule:

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.3c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7.2  | Do you favor retaining the current finish cylinder rules? | Yes 48%  
No 43% |
| 7.2c | Comment on finish cylinder rule: | 24% |
| 7.3  | If answer to 7.1 is yes, what type of penalty would you favor? |  
A. No penalty - if you land in a field 1 foot past the cylinder edge you get full speed points.  
B. Graduated penalty to 0 feet AGL at cylinder edge (e.g. off airport landing after a finish can get speed points, but with a penalty)  
C. Graduated penalty to a minimum altitude at the cylinder edge that is still within gliding distance of the airport - landout if finish is below glide to the airport. |  
A 8%  
-  
B 20%  
-  
C 32% |
| 7.4  | If you favor a graduated penalty of some kind, what penalty severity do you favor? |  
A. 1 point per 100'  
B. 1 point per 10'  
C. 1 point per 5'  
D. 1 point per 2'  
E. 1 point per 1'  
F. Other (specify) |  
A 7%  
B 21%  
C 15%  
D 2%  
E 9%  
F 7% |
| 7.4c | If you selected other, please specify the graduated penalty you prefer: | 10% |
| 7.5  | If you prefer a fixed penalty for a low finish, what severity do you favor. |  
400-points  2%  
200-points  7%  
100-points  7%  
50-points  4%  
25-points  4%  
10-points  2%  
Other-(specify) 10% |
| 7.5c | If you selected other, please specify the low finish penalty you favor: | 11% |
| 7.6 | There has been discussion that the Safety Finish Cylinder is inadequate; that it is too small in large weather events, doesn't provide enough safety and actually encourages pilots to enter a potentially unsafe area. Do you favor having the RC revisit the safety finish parameters? | Yes 61%  
No 28% |
| 7.6c | Comments on Safety Finish Cylinder: | 36% |
| 8.0 | **Turnpoint Radius** | All |
| 8.1 | Do you favor eliminating the ability to gain distance within the 1mi turn-point cylinder during MAT's and AT's?  
In other words, the pilot is scored from the center of the turn point regardless of where he/she turns within the turnpoint cylinder.  
Pros:  
- Aligns US rules to the rest of the world.  
Cons:  
- Favors tactical flying to the shortest point; potentially concentrating traffic in a very small area and requiring greater heads down flying to do accurately. | Yes 45%  
No 51% |
| 8.1c | Comment on Turnpoint Radius: | 28% |
| 9.0 | **Handicaps** | All |
| 9.1 | Do you favor adopting the European Handicapping system?  
(This system is currently use for OLC flights.) | Yes 49%  
No 35% |
| 9.1c | Comments on changes desired to the current US Handicaps: | 36% |
| 10.0 | **National Contest Participation** | All |
| 10.1 | Contest length/location:  
Would we have better participation in US National Contests if the length were reduced? | Yes 40%  
No 50% |
| 10.2 | Would you favor reducing the length of US National contests to: |
### 10.2c Comments on contest length:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>26%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 10.3c Comments on ways to improve participation in National Contests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>26%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 11.0 Team Flying

#### 11.1 Should team flying be allowed at National Contests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>44%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 11.1c Comments on team flying at National Contests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>26%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 12.0 Contest Pilot's Package

#### 12.1 Would you like to see the contest pilot's package published only in electronic format? (This significantly reduce contest administrative costs.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>78%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 12.1c Comments on the contest pilot's package:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>26%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 13.0 Website Changes

#### 13.1 Do you favor changing the website to list proposed Contests and Contest Site Bids?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>67%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 13.1c Comments on changing the website:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>24%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 14.0 Motor Gliders

#### 14.1 Airfield Bonus Rule 10.10.3.4.1 states that for a motorized glider to claim an airfield bonus, the motor must be started no lower than 1000' AGL from the airport elevation. Do you feel that this is too restrictive and should be lowered to 500' AGL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>36%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 14.1c Comments on Airfield bonus for motor gliders:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>39%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 14.2c Other Motor Glider issues or comments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-days</th>
<th>9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Committee Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.1c What ideas do you have to make contest flying more attractive to new participants?</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.2c Comments on other issues you would like the Rules Committee to consider at the 2017 meeting?</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Return to the [2017 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll survey form](http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/surveyresults.php) to check your input.

Return to main [survey page](http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/surveyresults.php).

If you have problems or questions contact the [survey administrator](http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/surveyresults.php).
Some specific text responses may not be shown due to offensive language or direct references to individuals.

2.4c

Please use the comment box to provide other views you have on the use of FLARM in contests:

2.4 it should be pilots option

Chris O'Callaghan

Contest size should drive any FLARM mandates. At large contests, it absolutely should be mandatory. However, for smaller venues (events with say ~30 gliders or less) it seems excessive in my opinion given that a large percentage of gliders are already FLARM or transponder equipped. We want to increase contest participation, and telling a new pilot (especially junior pilots with limited income) that they need to spend $1500 to equip their glider with FLARM prior to flying their first contest seems excessive. People flew contests before FLARM...

Excellent

FLARM has saved my life so I am a STRONG believer in having it and encouraging its use.

FLARM has shown me that my situational awareness is often not really as good as I think it is. It has also alerted me several times a contest of threats that I didn't know were there.

FLARM is a great device...for gliders. However, I think if we are spending peoples money, that money should be spent on ADS-B out. It's a great system and a great idea for soaring.

FLARM is a safety device. It should be mandated for all classes.

FLARM need determined by CD

FLARM stealth mode has no effect on safety or warning range of actual collision potential. Let's dispel the myth!

Flarm is not perfect, but it is way better than nothing.

Flarm is the best thing to happen to safety in soaring. It works great and is very important to me. Do not allow Stealth mode please.

Flarm should be highly encouraged and talked about with all new beginners. Flarm Stealth Mode should be prohibited. Everyone should see everyone.
Flarm stealth mode should be mandatory in all contests to discourage leeching

Flying with the FLARM for the past 3 years. Do not feel any safer then the 35 years without. If anything, has a tendency to keep the pilots head in the cockpit longer.

Great safety device for both glider to glider issues and TCAS for commercial and GA traffic. Organizers need to understand that mandating or encouraging stealth is a huge liability for the entity and the people involved with running the contest.

I believe Stealth Mode should be allowed until FLARM is mandatory for all competitors. Then disallow it.

I have notice some high rank pilots turn flarm off after starting.

I have witnessed two saves because of FLARM, More awareness is better than stealth!

I hesitated a long time before I said Yes to mandatory Nationals but No to Regionals. Despite the fact that I'm over 60 and have been an SSA member for 50+ years, I'm receptive to technology...when it addresses an actual need, when it works, and when the cost/benefit ratio seems reasonable. I borrowed a FLARM for a contest where they were mandatory and was so impressed that I bought it soon thereafter. But mandating a $1500+ expense for Regionals seems certain to depress participation. Yes, it enhances safety, although it's a two-edged sword (some pilots relax a bit, trusting FLARM to alert them). Is it "necessary"? The most certain way to decrease the risk of soaring is to not do it. Everything else involves balancing risk reduction and cost, as is the case here.

I like KISS. It's high time everyone is on flarm at nationals. Flarm is imperfect, and stealth gliders appearing suddenly is not good. More importantly, it leads to a lot of effort at stealth games. Just turn it on, it's a level playing field of flarm radar, and get on with flying.

I really like the traffic insight which is provided by Flarm. We should not make it mandatory at any contest because we do not anything to prevent someone from participating in a contest. Flarm Stealth mode should NOT be used until it has the same traffic seeing functionality as the non-stealth mode.

I suspect that and ADSB based system will replace flarm and therefore have a tough time saying that it should be mandatory.

I think FLARM should be a required technology

I think any contest with more than 30 gliders should be mandatory Flarm.

Looks like its useful for anti-collision, but more for leaching

No mandatory equipment, no restricted equipment. Period.

No stealth, keep it open like the rest of the world. Improves safety.

Not a reliable system enough to mandate.

People do NOT understand what Stealth mode does/does not do. The hysteria over Stealth needs to be addressed by the FLARM manufacturers by clearly articulating what impact it has on immediate conflicts as opposed to long range situational awareness.

Rental/loaner program is/was a good idea

Requiring it is one thing. Getting people to turn it on is another. The Power Flarm people need to do a better job of updates and supporting the product!

Safer to use Flarm.

Safety is paramount
Stealth mode is specifically not recommended by Flarm and destroys situational awareness while simultaneously assuming perfect operation and signal. This is stupidity or epic proportions. Congratulations 

Stealth mode reduces safety and reduces overall enjoyment in racing.

Stealth mode should not be used because it interferes with verifying that the system is working. If I see AA on flarm "radar" at a couple of miles, I'm pretty confident I'll get a collision warning when needed. I won't complain if PF becomes mandatory, but I have a hard time advocating for this. Do we DQ or reigning national champ is his flarm fails in flight?

Still do not have enough participation

Stop fighting technology, pilot's win contests not electronics. Those left in the dwindling contest pilot pool will not be discouraged by mandatory Flarm.

The mandatory requirement for FLARM should be based on the soaring site location and the number of sailplanes entered. It should be decided by the CM and CD based on these factors.

The only practical way to enforce 2.4 is to require scoring by flarm log.

The safety enhancement of FLARM is generally overstated. It drives up the cost of competing. FLARM continues to be used by less talented pilots to follow the better pilots out of the start gate and to rejoin gaggles.

This year I chose to fly the German Nationals where airspace was very congested and FLARM was mandatory. FLARM is an essential part of safely conducting contests and should be actively promoted by SSA

Until you have been involved in a midair because an other contestant figures that you don't really need one, it appears that safety isn't that important.

Useful tool, Not the ultimate safety solution, nor is it the end of the sport as we know it.

While I prefer contests without stealthmode, I think organizers should have the option of Stealth only contest if they want to.

adding expensive equipment requirement will stifle participation

allowing flarm users to go to the strongest thermals indicated on their flarm screens is the antithesis of competition. Stealth should not only be allowed but required.

the range is so limited - I do not see the huge difference.

| 3.2c |
| : |
| Comments on your views regarding specific guidelines for tracking: |

10-20 minute delay

5 minute delay. I also use IGC droid on my cell.

Allow and encourage, on sites that provide tracking information with a time delay that does not permit tactical use of the information.

Allowing tracking without restriction favors pilots/teams with higher budgets for equipment and manpower.

Anything that engages the public to drive up interest will hopefully lead to growth. Without growth, our sport is dead!
Assuming that SSA provides the means. But who’s watching and what are their responsibilities?

At the JWGC tracking was mandated and real time display was available to all teams. That leveled the playing field so all teams had equal info. In past WGC’s only a few teams had deployed antennas. In the US we are at an entirely different level because we do not have the extensive network of ground FLARM receivers. Our tracking is rudimentary and helpful to crews and should be encouraged.

Both InReach and CellPhone trackers are used together or interchangeably.

Can't fight technology advances, roll with it.

Contest organizers have too much to do already - they should not have to enforce technology restrictions. Trackers are an incredible benefit when pilots are unaccounted for - we should encourage them in every way practical.

Crew and others should be able to watch tracking which makes off field landings quicker to recover and encourage them to participate. We have a hard enough time getting pilots to participate. Let’s not discourage crews and contest personnel.

Delayed

Delayed real time tracking should be mandated. The use of trackers capable of rapid updates makes watching the races substantially more interesting and as such has potential to attract more to the sport.

Dunno.

Everyone else uses tracking. This shows potential to cut down on cheating.

Fear of competitors gaining a small advantage should not outweigh the safety benefits and spectator appeal that tracking provides. Don't spend the limited energy and volunteer time the SSA has on this until it is shown to be an actual issue that sways the outcome of events. We shouldn't spend our time waving torches at shadows.

Give organizers as many options as possible.

Good for safety, makes it more fun for crews. Could help generate interest in contests.

I have mixed feelings. I don't think it will move soaring to the top of the "American's most-watched sports" list. I worry that it could be misused. But like GPS and in-flight weather, it appears the genie is out of the bottle.

I have used Spot and InReach. I switched to InReach about 1/2 through this season to allow my friends, crew, and family have a better view into my current situation.

I see no good way to prevent communication with a team member watching all from the ground.

I think this should be borderline mandatory with the tracking app available now. Almost everyone has a cellphone they can use or Spot/inReach. This makes a big difference in involvement from the ground. I enjoy watching contests from wor when I have time.

If we mandate, what happens when a device fails?

If you mandate then you are putting more burdens on organizers. The technology for providing tracking is very fragmented, difficult to use and can be very time consuming for participants and organizers. Unless the SSA has and provides a 100% out of the box tracking solution just allow the pilots to make their own personal decisions. We should watch the HG and PG communities as they are leading the way with some technologies, using Airtribune, and going so far as to tie tracking directly into the scoring program. Once the shake out is done the SSA should learn from their experiences and look at adopting the best solution.
It would be nice to get a one year notice before unrestricted tracking is allowed, so everyone has a chance to figure out how to implement it.

Keep at pilot’s discretion for regional contests. Mandate tracking equipment for nationals by waiver and for Grand Prix type events. Strongly encourage its use at all events. It's a convenience, not a necessity. People landed out in the middle of nowhere in the era before cell service and satellite communication devices and made due.

No ground to air communication except for typical pilot to crew safety and status checks.

No need to try and micromanage. A rule will be obsolete when drafted and implemented. In addition, FLARM data to manage as well.

No rules on tracking please.

No tracking data allowed in cockpit

Pilots should not have access to long-range tracking info in the cockpit. KM

SSA should develop a box of cellphone trackers for live coverage, like the ones used in Australia. This is a perfect use for excess sanction fees. Future of the sport relies on better viewing experiences.

Should be mandatory as it’s simple and so valuable to the sports visibility and marketing. Requires a $30 Android Walmart phone and a $20 data plan for years of use. Laziness is no excuse.

Should not be mandatory

The (awesome) Glideport.aero site has/is dumbing down the Retrieve office responsibilities. On several occasions now they only use that site and don’t bother to read the comments/instructions on the landout cards. While the GP site is good, it does not show all the available trackers being used.

The genie is already out of the bottle and will improve further as ADS-B emerges.

The low refresh rate tracking like spot is not strategically useful and does not need to be regulated. If truly live tracking like FLARM net becomes popular in the US, this may need to be reevaluated.

There are safety advantages to tracking and sponsors should be allowed to require it.

There must be a large - 30 minute - time delay otherwise some are using it to cheat via sms position and start reports from crew that are watching. Personally, I can't be bothered watching others race but some think it is indispensable.

There will always be leaders and followers. Hard to stop this natural law.

This sport has always been based on individual performance. What is the compelling reason to make it a sport where following someone else is favored?

Track away. I use Spot and Cell Phone tracking. Couldn't select both.

Tracking is an issue if the information is being relayed to pilots. For now, I don't see that as a problem. When inflight internet becomes available we'll go through the usual routine, ban it for a while then give in once everyone has it and again we can have a KISS level playing field.

Tracking is critical for safety and spectator enjoyment of the sport

Tracking is fun for ground crew and fans plus a fast find in case of a crash. Get the Rules Committee out of the business of controlling the technology in the cockpit.
Tracking is good for the visibility of the sport and provides a safety tool. I watched a number of contests this year, including WGC and SGP events and appreciated the tracking feature. I personally will use tracking devices in the future. It would be a shame if they were prohibited.

Tracking is inevitable. I think we should allow the same tracking that is being used in European Contests.

Tracking is strategically important in promoting the sport. Experience shows that folks want to watch. The current tracking website is way below the bar for what is needed.

Tracking is the only way to involve people on the ground in the race anymore. And it makes race pilots slaving away at work want to take time off and go race instead. It makes it contagious. Please don't think I sound like Fidler but the man has some points...even if it comes across badly.

Tracking makes the sport more interesting. The disadvantages of electronic leaching seem less important than the ability to watch a flight.

Tracking with minimum 10 minutes delay

Would be great for spectators and crew to have real time tracking. This would generate a lot more interest in contests.

a 5-10 minute delay would allow all the safety and spectator needs without helping competitors.

increases interest in contests for non competitors and crew

it was really amazing to follow the WGC this past year in next to real time. looking at the altitudes, thermals strengths, and decisions of pilots was excellent! it would be great if we could do that in the US. i would say mandate tracking at the national level, and keep it optional for regional racing.

should be voluntary. Too much 'big brother'.

stop fighting technology, pilot's win contests not electronics

to increase popularity, the racing committee should supply sanctioned organizers with a tracker program like Australia

tracking could only help advertising, show the sport, share the sport...

tracking is the only way to get more people interested in Soaring.

4.2

Comments on any available technology that you would like to be newly allowed in aircraft as per the contest rules:

ADSB Weather and traffic

Allow any technology, require nothing.

Allow everything. If a great divide appears between haves and have nots create separate classes, e.g. Open class anything goes, Club class restricted use of gadgets etc.

Allowing weather tracking is a good idea for safety.

Anything that increases safety. And weather certainly increases safety.
Artificial horizons should be allowed. Cloud flying should continue to be illegal.

At Uvalde folks reported that cell data stopped working above a certain height. The folks with ADSB kit had a big advantage day 2 and last day

Being able to get cell phone WX is a safety enhancer and it's not going to tell anyone where the thermals are anyway... It's also impossible to regulate and so it's more fair to make it available to everyone.

Cell phone use in cockpits is illegal. TITLE 47--TELECOMMUNICATION CHAPTER I--FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (CONTINUED) PART 22_PUBLIC MOBILE SERVICES--Table of Contents Subpart H_Cellular Radiotelephone Service Sec. 22.925

Prohibition on airborne operation of cellular telephones. Cellular telephones installed in or carried aboard airplanes, balloons or any other type of aircraft must not be operated while such aircraft are airborne (not touching the ground)........

Cell phone weather was not successful.

Current rule works.

Current weather display using Foreflight with ADSB receivers such as Scout, Stratus, Stratux show traffic as well as weather, so non-Flarm ADSB traffic display should be allowed. KM

Due to FLARM, GPS, & real time tracking there is less & less time spent looking out the canopy. Until we have a contest for 2 place ships where 1 pilot flys & the other just watches for other sailplanes & views weathed these items should be discourages (outlawed??).

Ground to air FLARM radar and tracking. I think this would add a new aspect to the sport and encourage more participation from the ground crews and spectators.

I believe the question is wording incorrectly. There are many technologies that can be used with the new rules. I have seen a iPad and Stratus S1 setup that provides weather and air traffic awareness, great setup. The use of this type of technology should continue to be allowed for situational awareness and safety.

I had my phone available but never found it necessary in Hobbs. I think this is a good addition to safety awareness.

I have tested Cell phone weather tracking but not yet in a contest. Last year I only flew the Seniors, but I hope for more in 2018.

I like being able to access information in flight.

I tried, with no luck. Cell coverage stops and it's hard to see the darn thing in the cockpit. Still looking out the window.

If it per contest rules then it is allowed.

It's a safety benefit. Glide computers are integrating WX so it will soon be seamless to use. We should encourage it in every way practical.

Keep eyes out of cocpit no weather in cocpit please

Needs integration in in panel Nav systems hard to see on cellphones and signal strength is unreliable at times. Absolutely right to allow it, but why would manufacturers invest when US RC is so anti technology and could revoke it in seconds...

No comment

No restrictions

None!
Nope. I do not think you can really stop technological advance. Especially, if we really want to attract younger generation pilots. Maybe, we should consider some type of limitations in club and sport classes? However, how would you enforce restrictions? Do we really want to add another task to a CD job?

Nothing new.

Real time TFR updates
Satellite views of cloud streets location/terminus are really great!?

Text messaging from crews to pilots is ubiquitous in Europe. We should allow it as there is no way to police it

Weather data would enhance safety, and should therefore be allowed.

Who has time to foll with their phone?

Worked ok but had to buy a external battery.

Works OK

adsb portable units
cell phones in flight are NOT legal ??? are they ?
ground to air communication
non at this time.

using weather apps to follow the weather in the cockpit was great, i used it to track showers on iffy days, as well as watch cirrus sheets. useful stuff.

you can't stop technology & it never lives up to expectations.

5.1c

Comments on a wholesale move to FAI rules:

A sudden change will result in more confusion and potentially increased risk of accidents as pilot attempt to apply the new rules. A wholesale move to FAI rules would eliminate our ability to control, or have any realistic input to, our sport in America.

At this time. a complete comparison would have to be performed and disseminated to the contest participants for comments

Both systems have flaws / negative aspects. I prefer consistency and since other countries will not adopt USA rules, we should adopt the current FAI rules.

Contest resources are extremely thin, letting someone else take the load makes sense. FAI has a rules committee lobby for changes there.

Don't do it
Don;t beat around the bush, do it! Then get rid of WinScore - it's the worst code I've ever seen!
Exceptionally inefficient to manage our own unique rule system and supporting technology. Give up, let go, it's over.

FAI rules are not inherently better than the SSA rules. Almost NO ONE flying US contests ever serious competes in international contests, so it doesn’t make sense to force the entire US soaring community to adopt FAI rules for the benefit of just a few individuals. The same energy put into a huge rules change-over could be used instead to replace Winscore with an open system (perhaps even a web-based system that would be more use-friendly, make remote scoring easier, and allow score calculations to be more transparent for contestants).

FAI rules favour assigned tasks. I dislike assigned tasks - they turn into leechfests and prove nothing more than who can start last and follow the best. They leave little room for independent thought and use of the weather.

FAI rules should be used for National competitions

Good way to eliminate the MAT task. More landouts not inevitable. Gaggling is a problem already.

Having flown two worlds under FAI rules, they have some value but really do encourage significant gaggling to mitigate individual risk. In flying a worlds, the rules differences are not that significant - the fastest person still wins.

Hey our rules process generated many of the rules that have been adopted world wide. Competitively it makes zero difference as pilots will always try and find the best lift and make it home the fastest regardless of what the rules say around strategy.

I apreceate the effort from the rules committee to make our rules more user friendly.

I favor continuing the use of US Contest Rules

I have flown with both FAI and US rules. I do not think the FAI rules are necessarily better. Many eastern contest have been saved by the judicious use of MAT tasks.

I like our current rules, however some amalgamation of both sets of rules to get the best of both could be considered.

I think adoption of FAI rules would benefit the US Team, but more gaggle flying and landouts may discourage contest participation by pilots who have no US Team aspirations.

I think going to a full FAI rule will be too drastic and lead to issues including less participation.

I think we should get with the rest of the world. I think it would help our poor WGC team performance results.

I'm not a top notch racing pilot so it doesn't matter to me what rules you want to fly under. I'm not sure why the rest of the world uses FAI rules & we do not. Please explain.

If the switch is flipped and FAI rules are use there will be immense challenges on organizers, CD's and scorers to deliver a viable and fair contest Using FAI rules will require SeeYou competition to produce scores. While it is a robust product there is no connection to the SSA facilities, registration, pilot ranking and team selection so work would be needed to address these areas. Also you would require organizers to utilize SeeYou or equivalent for task planning, task sheets and other vital important functions.

If we want to be competitive on the world stage we better play by the same rules from day one.

It is better to influence the FAI than do something homegrown.

It seems we are safer with US rules than FAI rules. It is hard to get excited about more gagging and more landouts. I find that long periods in gaggles, particularly on weak days, are high workload conditions that I believe are more likely to lead to mistakes and safety issues. I'd like to see a realistic comparison of the FAI rules and the US Rules: for example, I understand that by voting for FAI rules we would be voting for rules where it sometimes pays off to slow down to get a better score, which doesn’t seem like something...
most US pilots would appreciate, and where there is usually no speed control on starts, which doesn’t strike me as good for safety.

Keeping US rules, except maybe changes to scoring, fosters participation.

Let's not turn over our rules to a bunch of Europeans. Did you see how their committee tumbled the handicap list this fall? Do we really want to be subject to their whims? Let's keep local control of our rules. I'm fine with adoption of some aspects of FAI rules, like the scoring formulas and start line.

Looks like they have some good and some really bad aspects. Avoid the bad ones.

MAT's are a great tool for handicapped class contests.

Many of the innovations in tasking were a direct result of the US contest committee coming up with a "better way". Eliminating starting out the top will lead to worse congestion at the top of the cylinder (safety issue) then we see now. The MAT is an excellent task when the performance/experience/skill levels among the competitors varies greatly. Keep it. The rest of the world will eventually learn that landing out during contests kills newby enthusiasm (and requires a crew); which the TAT addressed.

Move at National level contests. Nationals are qualifications for Worlds and pilots have to be able to fly by the same rules as Worlds

Needs to be broken into constituent parts. No sense in commenting on "the rules" as a whole. Elements include: Task Types, Scoring formulas, starts, finishes, etc. There may be some that make sense, but not until there is an element-by-element comparison.

No wholesale move to FAI rules.

Not a good idea at all. Our rules are in a lot ways similar to FAI but don't incorporate some of the more arbitrary rules that lead to a lot of gaggle flying.

Not the FAI rules, just the TP radius on a AT and the start line.

Ok for Nationals but takes away some of the fun atmosphere of regionals and makes the contest rule oriented..

Perhaps FAI rules should be used at National competitions used to select WGC contestants. However, Regional contests are both about competition and drawing in new competition pilots. I believe the US rules work well for that purpose.

Safety and participation concerns

Sean Fiddler may sit down and shut the hell up. :) 

Stay as is. It increases participation, reduces landouts, is safer.

The MAT should remain as a choice for the CD.

The U.S. is one of the world's leading gliding countries. We have pioneered new things in competition rules in the past, some of which the rest of the world has adopted. If FAI rules are better, great! If some are and some are not, use the ones that work. Getting our pilots used to flying under FAI rules for one contest every two years that a handful of them attend is not a good enough reason in and of itself to change.

The US rules are safer, simpler, to understand as far as scoring and more welcoming of newbies. However, we should not mischaracterize the effects of a change to FAI rules. For example, I disagree that they cause more land-outs or encourage more gaggle flying. The gaggle flying occurs at WGC levels because the pilots at that level have a much higher understanding of risk reward ratios and a great respect for each others abilities. They would fly the same way with our scoring system!
The US rules evolved slowly and thoughtfully, please leave all of them as is.

The US rules have served well for many years and give the CD maximum flexibility in tasking. We should look to retain our current contestants and a move to pure FAI rules would, in my opinion, drive away many.

The move needs to done in a sequence too complicated to discuss here. Will take 5 years to do properly but should be done nonetheless.

The only reason I say no is to accommodate the folks that are resistant to changing to international rules.

The only reason I see to move the FAI rules is to promote gaggle flying and gaggle flying practice. I'm not sure many pilots really want to work on this skill unless you are interested in flying on the US Team. It also could be a big turn off for some pilots which I do not think, we want to do anything that would make someone not want to go to a contest with the limited contest pilot pool we have.

There is no strong reason to adopt FAI rules and lots of negatives for all US contest pilots other than perhaps a handful who fly in international contests.

They do stupid stuff in FAI, but other differences are benign and we shouldn't be different just to be different.

US rules must favor safety and participation, without crew and without motors. Mass landouts will kill the sport. "FAI rules" will also mean "local procedures" almost as long as the current rules! However, we can move in that direction -- why not allow radio communication at nationals?

Viewing the effects listed I see no positive reason to change.

We are better off having local control of the rules. Will need lots of local tailoring anyway, which is explicitly expected within the FAI rules.

We lose world contests because we make our own rules and are unfamiliar with FAI rules and techniques. If the point of regionals and nationals is to make a world competition pilot, then have the same set of rules.

We should be flying and training under the same rules as FAI and working within the system to lobby to make the rules safer not devising our own set of rules. Lastly, you can always adopt "local rules" that pertain to host site. Regional contests could use this feature liberally if need be to cater to the needs of the contestants and ensure safety.

We should retain some of ours.

Why would FAI rules result in more landouts - smaller cylinders?

A move should not mean a total elimination..... this is kind of very negative and comes off inflexible. Regionals need to be more open - nationals need to be more FAI

Being internationally competitive is really just a concern for a minute % of pilots.

Starting out the top is nice. the FAI rules are only part of the mess, local procedures are the key to it, would you require each contest to go through the detailed local procedures as we see at a WGC. IE explaining which start, which finish, etc. OUR AST seperates pilots better at the turnpoint. See you can already be used, someone just needs to write the script...

There are a few things i'd miss. the i wouldn't miss the MAT (except on ridge days at mifflin) i would miss starting out of the top of the cylinder. the ability to choose your first climb to cloud base very carefully is great, and sets the flight up for a good rhythm IMO. one thing i dont understand, and which makes no sense to me, is when people intentionally land out under FAI rules to get more points. maybe i've misunderstood that somehow. but if that's a thing, it's stupid. now--as a future US team member faced with that scenario,
if i was being told to land out by the captain/ground crew, obviously i would

5.2c

Comments on a gradual adoption of FAI contest rules:

3-5 years is fine. Never is fine as well.

A camel is a horse designed by committee. Do we really believe that going to FAI rules will address the first two listed problems? I think the real problem is that here in the US our Team members do not fly enough. Has anyone tried going back and scoring recent Nats using the FAI formulas to see if the outcome changes?

Adopt some but not all rules

Again, I do not see how this benefits anyone other than the very very few individuals who fly in Worlds contests. We should continue to refine the US contest rules in ways that appeal to the US soaring community and our operations (not European operations).

As Rick Sheppe said.. encourage repair of "stupid" FAI rules. I'd like to keep MAT. Not sure about eliminating starts out top of cyclinder.

As above - use the good, avoid the bad.

Change must come quickly. Rip the band aid off, don't peel it slowly. This is not our sport, it's a European sport. Want to win at someone else's game? Make the rules the same.

Do it or don't. If you have the ability to competitently fly a glider, you can learn new competition rules.

Don't see much difference between Q 5.1 and Q 5.2

Either switch or stay where we are, don't create some Frankenstein gradual transition nightmare.

Except for Nationals

FAI rules for all nationals, and a requirement that at least one day of regionals be flown using FAI rules

Favor cherry picking preferred portions and adapting our rules to mirror rather than wholesale move, whether that wholesale move is gradual or not.

Gradual is like gradually removing a bandaid.

Having been WGC team captain three times, I observe that our shortcomings have very little to do with FAI rules and scoring. They have everything do with our very short tasks, the lack of intense AT task experience and the lack of pair flying training, among other factors.

I do favor adopting moving towards FAI rules where they don't impact safety or participation. Do FAI rules advocates really mean it -- we do everything in meters and kilometers?

I think it is best to follow FAI scoring rules but keep some of the safety rules the SSA has developed over time.

I think there are good in both sets of rules and a more moderate change may be best.

I would prefer longer tasking that uses more of the soaring day. It would be a good change instead of just 2 hours of the best
weather.

I'm somewhere between a gradual move to full FAI or something similar to FAI. We have a lot of rules that I feel make sense as opposed to true FAI. We can implement the scoring formula and some other features but if you've flown FAI, it is a big shift. I feel a lot of things are unsafe.

If the switch is flipped and FAI rules are use there will be immense challenges on organizers, CD's and scorers to deliver a viable and fair contest.

If we want to be competitive on the world stage we better play by the same rules from day one.

In favor of gradual, partial adoption of FAI rules for Nationals only. Keep US start/finish rules (for safety reasons). Continue to restrict pilot-pilot communication and info from ground (to limit team-flying and keep costs down -- serious competitor assembles on-site or remote ground support team) KM

In perhaps a reversal of common practice. I suggest that the Nationals use the FAI rules before the Regionals. Those attending the Nationals are more likely to have the advanced skills to adapt to the changes.

Just go for it!

MAT is a mixed blessing...it eliminates lots of landout days that we see in the rest of the world. but i would like to see the finish cyclinder stuff changed....Im a knuckle dragging neanderthal.

Maybe, if they come up with something we like. Interval starts for example.

Not sure in which order rules would be adopted. Scoring should become much simpler.

Retain starts out the top for safety reasons. Retain MAT in Regionals to provide more flexible tasking for a range of pilot skills.

Rules that encourage manipulation of technicalities in the rules must be avoided. Such gamesmanship has no place in any sport. FAI rules that are consistent wth testing pilot skills are fine. Rules that test one's ability to play off rules minutiae are not acceptable.

Safety and participation concerns

Same as above

Same as above. Scoring (for example) might be something to consider (i.e. steeper gradient between faster and slower)

The soaring world is small enough to have one set of rules, at least for nationals other than "special" classes like the 1-26.

There are some things in FAI rules that are good and somethings in SSA rules that are bad. How to take the best of each is the conundrum.

This is just an excuse to procrastinate

We could use FAI rules at one or two contests a year and see if the negative effects materialize.

We just need to switch over.

We needn't line up perfectly - for example, could retain starting out the top.

We should be the same except for local provisions that negate FAI dumbness. At minimum we should be able to score a US contest on SeeYou.

We should not move to the FAI rules, but rather try to convince the FAI rules committee to change to the US rules.
Whats the benefit? The scoring is used many places, but is very opaque. Try figuring your score without a computer. Daily placing on ATs is easier, but less relevant than the points.

Whats the point? The US rules are fine by me.

What's th point? Stop wasting time. Stop stalling.

Where FAI rules work better, yes.

Why suffer a death of a thousand cuts?

Why wait, use FAI or not don't waste time

Why waste time and create needless confusion.

Yes but only partially. See 5.3c for Nationals

im fine with wholesale move

in a perfect world i would like to see a merger of rules, but don't expect to see much movement from the IGC

keep the specific things we like (starting out the top). Tasking affects landouts, not rules.

see above comments. i think a gradual move would be easier to swallow but an immediate move would set us up to have up and coming teams understand FAI rules quicker. look at what they did when the US tried to switch to the metric system, if we'd all just bit the bullet and gone for it 100% i think a gradual change maybe less likely to get completed.

5.3c

Comments on retaining US contest rules as separate from FAI rules:

Adopt FAI only when more weight is placed on completion & less on land-outs, when start out top is adopted by FAI or line w/start out top is adopted by both

Copy/paste from previous two questions. :) Go with what works better for U.S. contests.

Except for Nationals

FAI rules seem to me to be more susceptible to being "gamed" such as intentionally landing out one's entire team to devalue a day so that another team cannot score enough points to go ahead in the standings. This is against the spirit of our sport (or any sport).

For Regional only CM/CD discretion

For now.

For now. Until the contest community has reviewed and commented. Same forum as this survey, but dedicated to the FAI and US rules commonality and difference

I do not like having two sets of contests rules just like I dislike having SAE and Metric tools. Since the US is the maverick in this discussion, any concessions towards converging on common rules will have to come from our end.
I like our current rules. I am not in favor of landing out the entire racing fleet. I like coming home at the end of the day even if the entire day is not "used"

I like the MAT, especially the version with one or zero assigned turnpoints, and consider it the truest test of individual XC racing ability, since it makes leeching nearly impossible.

I believe there is far too much time and effort put into maintain a separate set of rules just for the US and scoring software. The time and effort should be directed at growing more contests locations and maintaining the current ones, recruiting and training scorers, CD's and other contest personal.

If we want to be competitive on the world stage we better play by the same rules from day one.

Kill them with fire.

Let's focus on encouraging safety, fairness, and simplicity. However, we must find a way to allow US Team pilots (and hopefults) to pair fly in US Nationals!

MAT's have saved contests - throw them away and go to FAI only could lead to more lost contests. They do however need to be limited in their use. Progress is being made in this area.

Maintaining US rules using a few adjustments seems to be the best road to take.

Many of the top racing countries have their own set of rules that are not consistent with the FAI.

More fun

Neutral on this one.

Not until the FAI changes how points are rewarded which currently favors gaggle flying.

Note the FAI rules may change soon! If the US proposal is accepted, I'll be all for moving to much of the FAI structure as it will be even better than the US structure.

Our Nationals for most classes should trend in the direction of FAI since this is the jump-off point for making the National Teams.

Pilots fly a strategy based (in part) on the scoring formula and "the rules". Are you suggesting that changing the scoring formula (& rules)would change who wins? If it doesn't, what is the difference? Try (re)scoring some recent Nats using the FAI formulas and show how it changes who wins (or makes the Team).

Recommend adopting parts of IGC rules that do not change the spirit of US contest rules (encouraging pilot participation) or adversely impact safety. Additionally, it may be beneficial to modify US scoring to be more in line with IGC scoring at nationals for the interest of team selection, however I would continue to choose the US national champion using US scoring rules.

Retain only for perhaps an additional 2-3 years so that the regional pilots can see the changes in action at the National level before using the rules at the Regional level.

See 5.2c. I'm for moving closer to FAI but with common sense.

Stupidity upon stupidity.

The MAT and long MAT are very good tasks, and would be elliminated with FAI rules.

The US rules evolved slowly over a long period of time, all for a reason, leave them alone please
The vast majority of have no plans to go to a world contest, ever. So who cares about FAI rules. For those that want to go to a world contest the FAl rules are just one more thing you have to get ready for.

This will not benefit US Team development and may be watering down the competition level among top pilots competing at Nationals.

Too complicated

Transition to FAl over 3 years for all contests

US Rules have been developed over the years to reflect the diverse flying conditions we have here in the US.

US airports, airspace, and regulations are all different from the conditions that Europeans fly under. Additionally, the US soaring community has a unique culture that does not necessarily value or desire the same flying experiences that FAI/European contests have. Adopting FAl rules would likely make it harder to attract new contestants and fill the different contest classes (for example, semi-serious competitors and crewless contestants are likely to balk at bigger gaggles and more landouts).

US needs can be met by the "local procedures" facility of the FAI rules. I also disagree with the bulleted assertions above - FAKE NEWS

US rules allow SSA to address US interests and needs.

We need to encourage participation. International are not focused on this

Why don't we ask the FAI to adopt the MAT?

With some changes to align with sensible parts of FAI rules.

Without the current US rules, the most successful US contest Class, Sports Class, would not exist. We need all the tasking options to be available in order to have enjoyable and safe contests. Forcing AT tasking would cause serious problems in many of the Western contest sites where outlanding options are often far apart. Also, eliminating the MAT option would allow Sports Class to be 100% TAT.

Would like to see us line up better with FAI, but only as far as consensus takes us.

Yes and no. We should retain exceptions for scoring formulae that encourage gaggling, low finishes, etc. We should be able to do that within a broader framework of using FAI rules.

Yes in Regionals. KM

for small regional races

im a knuckle dragging Neanderthal.

im fine with wholesale move

not forever. i like US rules, but i think we should move towards the rest of the world on this.

see above

separate rules creates confusion. It's an international sport, we should use the international rules!
### Comments on eliminating starting through the top:

Agree with arguments in favor of starting out top
Allow starts anywhere form the the defined cylinder.

Allows more starting thermals to be competitive, spreading the field out from the beginning. It is far more common to have only one good start thermal with every glider in it without the out the top option.

Also reduces congestion at the top of the cylinder, which is a safety issue. Would I have to fly out the side of the cylinder to start and then back in to thermal out the top? Even worse safety issue.

Argument #1 is safety. Spinning around the big thermal while looking at watch and altimeter with dozens doing the same is highly dangerous. It's as if this rule is intended to cause a fatal collision.

Complicates the start and requires greater pilot management in often dense traffic.

Continues (after 14 years of trying to get it right) to produce scoring errors and uncertainly as to what your speed is till the scorer tells you. Not like the good old days.

Don't eliminate unless we switch to FAI rules.

Don't use it much, but I do agree with having it in the rules

Eliminate ONLY if current unrealistically low start cyl tops are raised considerably

Eliminate at nationals for conformity with IGC rules, retain at regionals

Eliminate the front half of the cylinder rule.

I *like* the out the top option.

I favor eliminating the Top. All the top of the cylinder does is add complication to the task setter and the pilots. I would suggest we get rid of the cylinder and go to a long line. Guessing the cylinder was adopted because early GPS units were only capable of displaying a distance from the turnpoint and not a line?

I feel like starting out the top can be too random. The CD is supposed to set the top 500; below cloudbase but a lot of times this doesn't happen and pilots are flying around right at cloudbase anyways or if blue or wave conditions exist, a few pilots find a lucky climb giving them an advantage over the other pilots. I feel like we should move to a line or a cylinder where at least everyone starts out the side.

I like it

I like starting out the top.

I love starting out the top and the tactical wrinkle it adds to tasks. As a west coast and mountain pilot, I favor being able to get as much altitude as possible before venturing out on tasks that require flying out over marginal terrain early in the flight.

I prefer starting out the top but am ok with eliminating it.

I really like it as another tactical choice.

I see starting out top as useful out in the West with hazardous/unlandable terrain.

I start through the top whenever possible for the reasons given in 6.1 but would be willing to eliminate it as part of a migration to FAI
rules.
I used it more this year than ever before. It’s just another tactic. Retain the option.
If it's a problem, make the top of the cylinder 17999’MSL !

If starting out the top pilot should not be allowed to re-enter Start Cylinder. If re-entering must meet all rules for starting out the side including time below top of cylinder.

If we stay with SSA rules, I favor maintaining start out the top in its current form.

Increases potential starting points hopefully spreading the field out a little.

It adds another level of complexity for limited benefit. Height limits must be set appropriately and CD’s must be willing to raise the height before the gate opens if advisors provide feedback that convective level is higher than expected

It helps separate starters - keep this.

It is another variable that makes contest flying more interesting.

It's the CD’s choice to set the start type and a start out the top is as valid as any else.

More separation. More opportunities for novice pilots to be successful

Not strongly for or against but side on leaving start out the top as is.

Please. Just STOP tweaking.

See above. We should move toward FAI rules

Start out the top is great. "Start anywhere" or "roll out and go" would be even better. Why is a start defined by crossing some line? Let the start by like the turnpoints -- the best scoring fix in the start cylinder. Roll out and go.

Starting off the top is an important safety feature because you can start anywhere in the semi-circle and are not forced to pack it in with gaggle at the edge of the circle. In addition it provides great tactical flexibility and the ability to start away from the gaggle if one wishes

Starting out of the top is logical, provides for safety and takes away some of the pressure on the CD on guessing about the TOL especially on days when the launch is delayed

Starting out the top INCREASES gagglng as pilots try stay just below the top, winding up with spoilers open.

Starting out the top is a great way to leave the area and makes it safer to get away from the airport, spreads pilots out, which is also safer.

The main benefit I see is the safety of reduced gagglng. I believe contestants can ask the CD of a given contest not to use Start Out the Top. I suggest the Rules Committee ask CDs to report the number of times they receive this request.

The option of starting out the top has made my contest flying more enjoyable and reduced the start point/line congestion.

The pilot that makes an exceptionally lucky climb out the top will have a considerable advantage on the first leg of the race.

There are times when out the top makes safety sense.

There doesn't seem to be any tangible safety benefit in eliminating starts out of the top. Additionally, removing starts out the top
doesn't inherently improve the accuracy with which we can determine the best pilot at an event. Having the option to start out the top provides a meaningful decision-point that requires careful judgment by the pilot (something we should be measuring as part of their skillset/performance).

There is compression of many gliders just below top of cylinder, unsafe
This could become a moot point if all starting cylinder tops were at 18000 msl
This has been very effective at spreading pilots out prior to the start. KM
Top folks wait for temps to rise, see CU bases rise, then they climb out the top to Cu Base and head out on course in the wisp's. This needs to stop as its "pre task" strategy and the race should be "On task" strategy.
Use a line start.
Why continually confine the judgements available to the pilot. Let's not see who can just fly the same wiege board fastest!
With big cylinders it helps. This idea that someone starts out the top and then runs down the gaggles on course does not happen often as starting out the top needs several thousand feet above the gate height to pay off and then your over the in gate guys. getting higher is usually a good/safe thing.
i don't favor it. but if we move to FAI rules, i think it should be done. out west, you have to raise the start height, or modify it on a day by day basis to accomodate the weather conditions. in flight task advisors can say if they think the start is risky.
it gets to be a cluster fuck when the top of the gaggle is using the spoiler and everyone packs into the thermal...I prefer allowing a start out the top.
neutral.
not unless we go to FAI in total

6.1.2c

Comments on retaining starting through the top front half rule:

Allow starts anywhere form the the defined cylinder.
Award the pilot for the mileage they actually fly
Calculate distance points from wherever pilot exits. KISS
Do not see much of a problem with this rule as it is currently written and used
Does yes mean retain or eliminate. I mean eliminate. Folks bounce the gaggles anyway since it is always a good idea to pop up as far back as possible and then see if you do better.
Don't want to be starting a long way from home on a weak day.
Eliminate
Eliminate
Eliminate the front half rule, it's too hard to judge in the cockpit.
Even with the current rule a 5 mile run after a start near the center has pilots flying through gaggles near the front. This doesn't seem to have been a problem. KM
Favor eliminating for reasons given in 6.1.2 Cons.
Front half being hard to estimate is a non issue if you use first turnpoint center. It's a geometry only issue then. We don't need more complexity in the flight computers.
Front half rule has always been nonsense. The hassle is having to hand score when a pilot starts out the top and catches the cylinder again "on course". You should be scored from where you exit the cylinder - KISS. Reduce the 2 minutes required loiter time, that causes congestion (safety) also.
Get rid of this highly dangerous, stupid rule now before it's too late.
Great American innovation. FAI should adopt it!
I do not see the need to change.
I don't see any good reason for limiting good starts to the front half (sort of) of the cylinder.
I think you should get credit for distance points from wherever in the cylinder you start through the top.
I wish there was a "no opinion" option. This issue is not important to me, so I'd leave it as-is to avoid changes to WinScore. Contrary to the statement "no glide computer depicts it" I believe both the ClearNav and LX9000 series computers make it fairly easy: if the angle to the next turnpoint is <90 degrees you are in the front half.
I'm for removing the rule. Flying through gaggles has not proved a problem using the front half. The main concern is that starting in the back on a downwind leg will prove to be a "clever" strategy. And also a bit unfair to late launchers, who have to get there.
If you are going to have cylinder starts then make it simple and allow the start from anywhere.
Leave the start rule as is.
Not a strong preference on this. The safety benefit of retaining it appeals to me, but I don't like the fact that the front half of the start cylinder can't be determined exactly until the contestant makes their first turn (problematic with a TAT). I think a legitimate case can be made on both sides of this issue.
Please. Just STOP tweaking.
Preventing backside starts out of the top reduces the risk of flying through gaggles but concentrates the gaggles in the front half. Everything is a compromise. So keep it simple: start out the top wherever you want.
Question 6.1.2 is worded completely ambiguously. What does a "YES" answer mean? Get rid of this rule.
Question is ambiguous. Do you favor retaining the rule? is clearer.
Question is not worded for "Yes/No" response, but I would retain the front-half rule. There are many flight computers that CAN be configured to show the half-circle start.
See comment in 6.1.1c
Seems like a theoretical problem this is solving rather than a practical one. And it lessens the problem only slightly as the strategy, if
it works, is still useful, only for a slightly shorter distance.
Start area (for full distance credit) is already huge. We don't need to double it.
Starting from a line starts all, when they choose, to a "on course/task" test versus now a pre-start competition and unfair advantage
to some. Start line used at the JWGC/WWGC,WGC is/was different than what our folks were/are use to. We need now to conform as
this leads to better understanding of pre start strategies, etc.
Starting out the top reduces gaggling. Front half of cylinder is not hard to estimate from the cockpit. Penalty not great if you get a bit
wrong.
The clock starts for both pilots at the same time.
The front half is actually a swept area from the point the courseline leaves the start cylinder isn't it? So it isn't even a half. If the back
"half" of the cylinder isn't useful as a start point then why call it a cylinder. Go to a line.
The previous question is ambiguous as worded: Does yes mean that you favor retaining or eliminating the rule ?? It should be
eliminated. Distance should count from where ever you exit the cylinder, period.
The start anywhere rule has been a plus in reducing start cylinder gaggles. I think that distance credit should be allowed for a start in
the rear of the cylinder as it was originally. The issue of the starters in the rear of the cylinder flying through the front gaggles can be
mitigated by a start cylinder that is not set too high.
This question is unclear. I support eliminating front half and allowing starts anywhere.
This should not be a yes or know question. It's confusingly written. I favor getting rid of the front half rule.
To many rules ads complexity and trying to control every move means gaming the start. Can we just start and get going?
To what am I saying "Yes" or "No", "retaining or eliminating"? Lousy question! Get rid of the front half rule!
Unable to answer question
Wording (6.1.2) is faulty. Favor using entire cylinder.
Your questions is not well worded for a yes or no response. I favor retaining the front-half rule as now applied.
case for change is not strong.
none
phrased wrong - isn't a yes / no answer
retain the front half. its a close guess...but starting out the back will have too many people blow through the cyclinder. it also
becomes a larger area and increases the luck factor.

6.2.1c
:
Comments on adopting a Start Sequence model to be tested at the Regional Level:

A primary goal of the rule is to get pilots out on course rather than watching each other. We don't have that problem in regionals.
A solution looking for a problem

Again I wish there was an option for "no strong opinion". To avoid changes to WinScore I'd leave it as-is.

Although I'm not a fan of big gaggles, I do not like the idea of taking the start time out of the pilot's hands. You're reducing the meaningfulness of their choices by correcting their real start time to an artificial value. You're also rewarding pilots who - purely by chance - get a good climb and are able to run through the start gate in optimum position right at the designated start time. This hands them an advantage that was largely determined by the weather and the happenstance of a thermal's formation in the exact time and place it was most useful to that individual. Lastly, the pressure to make a start by a specific moment in time means people might be encouraged to blast through gaggles at high speeds on their way out of the cylinder. It puts a time and speed pressure on the contestant that runs directly contrary to trying to keep start speeds safe and below VNE. And let's be honest: hardcore leechers are still going to latch onto the "hot ship" and try to follow it (or just beat it) out the start gate, so the most annoying start gaggles and roulette will not be removed by applying this system of start times.

Ambivalent on this potential change. Don't see too much benefit from the change

Another dumb idea not well thought out. This will actually increase gaggling. We also would have to require time hacks from the CD all the time - and the pilots would be staring at their clocks before starting.

Back to the old days where time selection really became a problem of fairness. Stop inventing more problems, especially ones we already fixed. KISS

Benefits seem tenuous. Start time choice is a part of pilot skill in reading the day. Don't take that away.

Excessive complication. Forces unfavorable start position.

Experiment. Sometimes certain start times are strongly preferable from a WX perspective.

Gaggling in the US isn't a problem but it doesn't hurt to give it a try.

Getting too complex, we have too many weather variables and I feel like this will give some pilots too much of an advantage if their start time is 10, 20, 30 minutes before or after others.

Good idea to test at regionals. I believe this was also tested at the Europeans in Lasham. Might see how people there liked it.

Great fun flying mini Grand Prix (which each designated start would be). Also WGCs will adopt designated starts so we should pray them!

Hard to test at Regional level because of low participation. Not appropriate to test at National level first. This rule is great for 100+ World level competitions.

I do see this as a problem. It would be interesting to talk with 2017 Euro Championship CD (Andy Davis) to see what he thought about the use of the Sequenced Start Times which they tired.

I don't really care for the idea, but think letting regions test it if they want to is an ok option.

I think it would be great to experiment and learn, but I don't think I will like the idea (willing to try though) Why add another thing that makes us more different than FAI?

I think this would be an interesting experiment.

I would like to fly in a regional that uses this first before adopting it as a rule or option.
I would like to limit gagglng, but that rule seems very complex and could lead to a lot of confusion and distraction in the air.

I would like to see an opening and a closing of the start gate. For example, if the start gate opens at 1300, the gate closes at 1400.

If someone has a good reason for the change I'd like to hear it. I don't see one. It gives unjustified weight to something that is not related to flying the contest as opposed to flying the start.

If that's the intent, then do a grand prix.

It would be difficult to make this fair on marginal days.

KISS-(Keep it simple stupid) Why do the rules have to keep getting more complex?

Might split field into several gagglngs instead of one. Or might just induce more intense jockeying for position prior to each start time.

My experience from HG competitions that use of this type of start gagglng is increased not reduced as folks will hang out and wait for the next start interval. Larger groups of folks starting together will occur as the time will roll over and folks will exit the start cylinder. CD will have to be careful with picking the time interval i.e 10, 15 or 20 minutes, as if it is too short pilots will wait around for the next start time and caused gagglng, too long and pilots may be forced to wait around in poor conditions How many start times would be allowed (if you pick 20 minute intervals and only choose three start times and the weather does not cooperate you will force everyone to have the same start time) Can be a safety issue as more pilots may decide to return to the start cylinder to get the next start time. May cause difficulty in communicating or setting start times. The rules now state Task Opens - at a time designated by the CD, about 15 minutes after the last competitor who accepts his designated launch starts his takeoff roll. Since launch duration is very fluid how would start times be communicated? Today the CD calls ‘Start opens at 13:17’ assuming the last competitor took off at 13:02. If start intervals are adopted how will the communication go? ‘Start times are 13:17, 13:32 and 13:47 for October 10th’ or ‘The first valid start time is 13:17 with 3 15 minutes intervals’ or ……

No adds complexity for no gain of safety.

Not enough information given to answer the question. The details matter. How are the times assigned? Are they assigned randomly, by pilot choice, etc. How does this affect grid position, etc

Not realistic

Not sure if this is a good idea - might be worth a try.

Not thrilled with this. Eliminates strategy wrt cloud cycling etc.

Our contest participation is low and getting lower so the number of gliders is manageable. Plus we do not have the FAI rules that encourage strict gaggle flying on weak days particularly. We like to do our own think WAY to much.

Part of contest flying tactics should be in choosing when to start. I would not be interested in flying a contest where this choice in not allowed.

Part of the whole contest is the judgement of making ones own decision as to when to start - i.e. reading the conditions.

Same comment. Freeze the damn rules unless/until there is either a major technological change OR a major error/issue is discovered.

Seems like this would add another level of complexity to both flying and scoring.

Sequenced start times is a terrible idea and would introduce many unfair scenarios.
Several pilots would try to start close to the identified start time. Would result in gaggles before start and several pilots starting/flying together.

Spreads out the gaggles. Give another item of judgement to the pilot. We used successfully in Hang Gliding for years.

Start time choice only by entrant's.

There is a ZERO chance of scoring this correctly.

This is Grand Prix style start and will increase gaggling not decrease.

This is just plain dumb.

This will add more complexity to the starting procedure where the highest concentration of aircraft would be located.

This will lead to enormous gaggles leaving at the start time.

Too complex

Too complicated for regionals.

Too gimicky. Use a regatta start or stick with what we have.

Too much complexity when you consider relights.

Trying new ideas can be helpful

Unfair, more complications some times 5 minutes difference make finishing task impossible

Unnecessary added complexity

Way too complicated for a 1st time contest pilot

We have offered so many things to be tried at regional, and they never get tried. Adieu the excellent drop a day proposal, adieu the last start time proposal. Regional CDs have their hands full with current rules and not having to try new ones. If you want to try something, do it for everyone for a year. On this one, either put back in last start time, or wait for the similar FAI proposal. If the FAI does it, then implement the FAI's version at least for a year.

Who the helck had this visit from the good idea fairy?

Would be interesting to see how it works in a contest

Would increase head down time in the cockpit as pilot tries to get most favorable start time. ie. 13:39:30

Yet more rules!

i think you’d see more congested start gate gaggles as people try to sit at the top of a thermal and wait for their start time. i also think that in difficult weather conditions it would be impractical. and i think you’d end up with a lot of frustrated pissed off pilots. there will be weak days when it's not so simple to just be ready to start. there was a day this past year when it took at least a dozen of us 40 minutes to get up to cloud base because the thermals were sheared. if we’d had to start, we wouldn't have been able to get across the valley to the ridge heading down the first leg. we needed the extra time to be able to even reach a reasonable (not to consider optimal) start height.

no, current or FAI method is fine.
start sequence is bull****
this would take start decisions away from the pilots and besides guys would just gaggle to start as close to a sequence time as possible. bad idea
too complicated
umm no

6.3.3c

Comments on replacing the Start Cylinder with a Starting Line:

A starting line causes a much greater congestion at the start gaggle over the start cylinder that tends to spread the start into, usually, several gagelles reducing collision hazard.

A starting line not only might encourage speed-limit issues, but it also removes strategic decisions from the pilot by limiting the places and directions in which they can start. This reduces or removes an area of skill that currently factors into pilot's scores.

Actually there are no high speed starts at the WGCs I have been to because the start height is unlimited. Please correct this misconception

Again, if you are going to do this, make it a grand prix!

Again, this is going back to problems we already fixed.

Allow replacement of Start Cylinder with Start Line by waiver

Allow the use of either based on CD choice

Be an option

Been there, done that. Didn't like it!

Do not switch

Don't much care personally; the start cylinder seems more flexible though.

Either go full FAI or not.

FAI rules allow the use of cylinders

How about using a finish line also? Or is that already an option?

I am not strongly opposed to adopting a start line. U.S. Team Camps and Grand Prix are places to practice this for team pilots.

I flew a lot of contests with 1000m start lines. I don't think they're dangerous, per se. But the cylinder offers more options for starting so why change?

I had my fill of the start death dive prior to GPS starts. The US system is not perfect as it still requires some instrument monitoring, but altitude only. Not position relative to a line that can only be seen on a cockpit screen. The GP start does use an altitude and speed limit but results in lots of start penalties which may not be obvious to the pilot until post flight analysis.
I have flown in six FAI contests which used a Starting Line, and NEVER have I seen a competitor use a high airspeed start. This is an old wives tale.

I like the cylinder. I remember the "old days" of the start line and much prefer the cylinder.

I like the start cylinder

I prefer the cylinder

I really like our current US Start Cylinder system. I have flown with both. I like different approaches to keep things interesting.

I think this option should be tested and looked at. I've flown 3 worlds with the line and no one should be dive bombing at Vne. It isn't efficient and I think most people realize this now. If you are concerned, then don't set an artificially low start gate altitude.

I'm just happy to start.

IF we have a method currently that makes sure that you do not exceed the max ht. for 2 minutes before you cross the cylinder, why couldn't the time limit apply to crossing a line

If KS can go 50knts over VNE so can I....bring it...

If we want to be competitive on the world stage we better play by the same rules from day one.

Launch everyone. Ring the bell. After the bell everyone must visit altitude x (i.e. leave the weak wave you found an hour ago). You can then start the task at any altitude. Don't see any reason to dive and zoom, as you just waste energy.

More fun, safer (more predictable)

More separation between gliders, pilots have tendency to stay inside cylinder before start

My experience in Germany this year with start line instead of cylinder was very positive. I came away strongly believing the start line enhances safety over the cylinder option.

Not in favor, but don't strongly oppose.

Safety!!!!

Seems goofy to re-visit the highspeed start when we have a better start already

Settles the start-out-the-top debate!

Start line can enhance fairness. However, there still needs to be an altitude limit.

Start line is a relic of the pre GPS era. We went through it and discarded it for a reason. If we change start, change to the roll out and go start.

Start line is fine. Start cylinder is fine.

Start line is used for FAI, records, everything else. It's an important skill to master. Practice in competition!

Start line starts are inherently unsafe - like they were when we used them. Unfortunately the Europeans generally respond to "safety complaints" by stating that we don't have to fly (that way).

Start line would be dangerous, No Please.

Start line would increase gagging
Terrible idea.
That comment "Neither the IGC or the SSA" is unnecessary and wrong. Ground speed can be used as it is in the Grand Prix. You may have objections but it works fine.
The Start Cylinder is safer.
The only real safety feature of the Start Cylinder is the requirement to be below the top of the cylinder for 2 minutes. Apply this concept to the Start Line & there would be no high speed starts.
The start cylinder works pretty well. The start line seems to me to be favored by those who think a sailplane race should be a gaggle drag racing to the finish.
The starting line is usually long enough that gliders can spread out. Also eliminates checking with scoring later to verify correct start. The starting line would spread out the contestants. If used in conjunction with the staggered start it may reduce congestion.
To reduce gaggling make the start line wide. We already have a speed limit in the start cylinder just use that limit before crossing the line.
Too hard to control high speed starts
Try it in regional first.
UNLESS we go full FAI
Unlimited line height limits high speed starts
We used ground speed at the SGP in Seminole and found no problems in doing so or with the scoring. Limited start speed to 115 mph ground speed within 2 mile of start line. No thermaling within a prescribed arch and turns in one direction. Seriously, it's easier done than said. The start line gives a fair chance to all, not just a selected few, as all start thru the same area/micro air mass area then head out on course making choices on where to fly/go.
What does "MyChoice" mean? Why isn't this just one question with two possible answers? Confusing...
While I favor convergence towards FAI rules, I do not favor start lines, having used them years ago
Why can airspeed not also be limited for line starts as it is for cylinder starts? IE must be below 100 kts ground speed for 1-2 min before crossing the line.
Why do it when the present system spreads out starts for safety purposes and is well liked by most pilots.
Why not do the really obvious: allow a start line with a 2 minute altitude rule?
Your statement in parenthesis is not true. The Sailplane Grand Prix has groundspeed control at the start line. Works fine. Let the CD set the start speed based on the wind.
cylinder works well, why go back to the dive under the line days? How many midairs resulted from this?
moe mid-airs likely
seperation is a good thing.
Comment on eliminating the loss of speed points when the finish cylinder radius is crossed more than 200 feet below the minimum finish height:

Agree with graduated penalty to a lower altitude. Safer than current rule where a pilot may try to slow fly or zoom his way above the 200 foot mark.

Allow this by waiver. Some locations might not be suitable.

Delete this silly penalty.

Favor low finishes and finish line with rolling finish slightly penalized

Finishes more than 200 ft below the cylinder should be penalized on a per foot basis.

Graduated penalty of 1 point per foot or distance points, whichever results in the higher score.

I agree with the present rule. It is much safer. It doesn't matter what altitude is set for the "airport in the sky". We all have to finish at the same place and pattern altitude is a nice place to be! Then we can quit racing, relax, sequence in, and enjoys safe landing from pattern altitude.

I am a huge supporter of the finish cylinder. Without it I would likely not race, as my normal high finishes would be too costly. Allowing finishing really low, and not counting it as a landout lowers the safety incentive.

I have been penalized by this rule even though I had plenty of altitude left for a safe landing. Ruined that contest for me.

I never had a problem with finish lines. If you fly or roll into the cylinder AND land on the airport, that's good enough for me.

I think that if you can make a safe straight in landing to the home airfield that you should be scored speed points. The current finish cylinder is too conservative. I've finished more than 200' below the finish cylinder several times and still comfortably made it to the field. In these cases there was no option for me to stay out on course and try for more altitude. Each case involved landing at the Home airfield as the safest option. If I can do so with enough energy to land safely, why am I scored as a landout?

I'm not sure why the concept of a task that requires a minimum finish height, not just return to the launch airport is so divisive. You don't get credit for starts or turnpoints if you don't do them right, why is the finish different?

I'm thrilled to finish at all.

I've heard of way too many pilots being landed out because they hit sink and finished a task at 599 ft instead of 800 ft. Yes, maybe they should have planned a little extra altitude but maybe they couldn't. I think in a lot of those cases it was still safer for them to continue to the home airport than landout along the way or try to thermal low. I've heard the stories of pilots pulling up and basically stalling the glider trying to get some extra altitude at that point - not smart but it happens. I'd rather see them have the option for a rolling finish with more minor penalty than a landout.

If a pilot doesn't want to risk the severe penalty, they can add 200 feet to their last climb.

In the Western contests that I fly, there are often few landing options when coming up short of the field. The retention of the loss of speed points when too low helps keep the final glide landouts down.

It could be site specific. Or encourage the CD to give severe unsafe flying penalties to people doing something unsafe.

It's not about the finish, it's about the final glide. As proved over and over again -- most recently Uvalde, with a glider literally pulling
up to balloon over power lines to plop on the airport -- if you can get speed points for strategies that lead to very low last minute landouts, pilots will do them, and gliders will be damaged or worse.

Keep it as it is

Loss of speed points encourages safer finishes.

Most WGC finishes are rolling finishes. They need to be allowed in the USA as well.

No one likes cliffs. Graduated penalty until you are out of speed points, like FAI.

No, as if one uses bouncing up during final glide, then fails to make a finish is the same as the folks who thermal up and encounter heavier than planned sink on final glide? IF this happens, then you need to pay the point penalty price. If you don't cross the line in any sport, you get spanked. Stop offering "help" with a strong finish rule is best. Get's rid of "hope".

Not quite sure of my point of view on this

RC has been pretty smart. Don't waiver.

Safety problems in Soaring are not coming from the finishes. I had a low final glide over Hobbs this year from the south. The finish penalty did not deter me from that. The possibility of wrecking my glider in a field vs. my assurance of a safe runway is what made the decision.

Seems like a step backwards in safety.

Set the zero speed point limit as a certain height AGL as opposed to 200 below the finish height. The lower limit should be based on finish radius and terrain. IE a finish below 200 AGL at 1 mile is a landout, but a finish at 300 AGL is penalized by an amount based on how far below the finish height.

Speed penalty is severe enough Pilots are avoidg finishing low to avoid penalty.

The issue is safety. To make up for poor airmanship we attempt to increase the separation when we should be dealing with the poor airmanship.

The penalty needs to be graduated

The specific reason to have a cutoff point that results in a landout is to strongly incentivize pilots to make good final glides with enough altitude to perform a safe landing in a potentially congested traffic area (i.e. an airport). Allowing rolling finishes removes that pressure.

This is a great example of using rules to encourage an important safety goal. It should not be changed.

This is the biggest non-linearity in the scoring. The penalty should be linear to the ground. 1pt/m works at the Worlds.

This modification defeats the entire purpose of a finish cylinder floor.

This rule has been bypassed at some contests by setting the finish cylinder minimum height at 200'. This has been done specifically to remove the penalty. A 200' base causes, in my opinion, unwarranted safety issues.

This typically happens not by gaming the finish but with minimum energy and a slow finial glide that does not quite make the 200 foot deal and presto a very large penalty. Let pilots decide what is safe in these cases.

Too drastic of a penalty.
Too much of a penalty. Low finishes should be penalized but at a lesser extent than a landout.
We should do nothing to encourage a "squeaker" finish. If you don't have the altitude to make it home safely, don't try.
We should encourage pilots to make safe aeronautical decisions and to defer taking needless risks associated trying to make a
finish that might create an unsafe situation.
We should have better guidance on how to set the finish height. Recently I've seen contests setting finish height very high (8-1000
AGL at 2 miles, for example), at large airports. Then you have the sudden death penalty for being say 6-800' high "only" 1.5 miles
from the runway. It makes no sense.
When you cross the finish at any height, the contest day is complete
Why? The rule is there to improve safety
You hit the fence bub. There needs to be a big competitive incentive to reach the airport with enough energy for a normal pattern.
The easiest way to make up a minute+ on your task is to shave your speed crossing a finish line. Bad incentive.
i still like it the old way. call me a loony maniac, but i think if you make it onto the airport, you get a finish. people just need to use
their heads during the last few minutes of the final glide. i appreciate, and even enjoy the margin that the current finish system
basically mandates, but it drives me nuts that you can get back onto the airport, and not get a valid finish.
if the point is to increase safety at the finish, especially in larger contest the height rule must have some teeth in it.
keep the heavy penalty if you go to a gradual penalty.
low is bad.
no comments
we are not student pilots
when you have the base still at an altitude where you are on O2 it can make it unrealistic to get back across it.

7.2c

A rolling finish must also be allowed.
A significant consideration in my participation at contests.
Also apply the same rules to a finish line
Apply only speed penalty if below minimum finish hight
Current finish cylinder rule should minimize finish accidents.
Current rule seems fair and safe - why switch?
Current rules are hugely inconsistent line/cylinder. At Uvalde crazy-dangerous straight-ins (with finish line) were un-penalized.
Cylinder is much safer that the line with lots of energy near the airport - but about 1/2 as fun.
Favor low finishes with rolling finish slightly penalized.
Great idea. All recent WGCs have adopted it and I notice that the minimum altitude is getting higher and higher! And pull-ups after crossing the circle are strictly forbidden
Greatly prefer finish line w/unpenalized rolling finish allowed
Having been hit with the penalty when making a safe straight in landing, I think it can be too severe for the infraction.
I never had a problem with finish lines. If you fly or roll into the cylinder AND land on the airport, that's good enough for me.
I suspect that we might see more short landings and accidents if pilots think they can still get points for low approaches.
I think a finish at the home field with an arrival within 1 mile at 500 feet agl should get full speed points.
I'd rather KISS in all rules. One foot short and no speed points. Lower the finish 200' if you wish. That's the way it was in the good old days. One foot short, and you're impaled on the barbed wire fence with no speed points, none of this graduated business.
If you make a safe landing on the airport why should you be penalized?
It should be a graduated penalty down to 500' AGL. Sometimes there is not a choice to get higher.
It works IF proper radius & altitude are used.
Keep it as it is
Keep it simple, but allow near misses without contest ending results as is done with starts and turnpoints. Current rule does this well.
Landing on airport should be required for speed points.
Leave alone or no ht. rules at all.
No need for a circle as a line with min. crossing height is all that's needed. Steering tp should be used in most/all cases. Need to return to way it was when folks came out and watched. Best to remember we are "racing".
Safety
See above
Some venues favor a finish cylinder and others can safely have a line finish with a low finish altitude. Leave it up to CM and CD what works best for the site and the experience level of the pilots.
Suggest removing requirement for finish to be at the contest site. Allow for some flexibility in task setting for special situations.
The finish cylinders are generally set way too high so many gliders are milling around losing height before the pattern - 500ft at 1 mile is just fine.
They work.
Those of us who flew low altitude finish lines know how unsafe they were. Hooking the gate even at high altitude can be problematic vs. a cylinder.
Want to encourage pilots to make safe choices. Allowing pilots to make rolling finishes may encourage more marginal final glides to the finish in poor conditions, whereas under current rules, a pilot who safely lands out several miles from the finish and a pilot who does a rolling finish from a marginal final glider will receive similar scores.
We need to measure total energy height.
You have to land on the airport to get speed points.
at nationals, does not prepare you to the worlds
graduated system which penalizes for lower finishes would be better. but i really think getting back onto the airport should still represent a finish
no comments

7.4c

: If you selected other, please specify the graduated penalty you prefer:

0
1 point per 3' would match the FAI 1 point per meter penalty
2 minute penalty for rolling finish. Same as 18M Uvalde Nats.
A12.2.5.1. In addition, If a pilot does not land back safely, then the landout after entering the finish cylinder is treated as a rolling finish.
All depends what is finish cylinder height With 200' 1 point per 5'
Current graduated penalty to zero feet, but must make the designated airport landing areas for speed points.
Current rule
I assume this is directed at people who want to change the existing rule. I don't.
I haven't thought through carefully what the graduated penalty should be. Just make it a "not severe" penalty
I never had a problem with finish lines. If you fly or roll into the cylinder AND land on the airport, that's good enough for me.
It should be a graduated penalty which gets worse the lower you are below the top of the finish cylinder to maybe, 500' AGL where you get 0 speed points. Maybe, log(X)?
No penalty for a safe arrival.
The goal should be to have everyone arriving at a safe pattern altitude. A finish height of 700-800 ft at 1-2 miles seems pretty common. 1 pt/5' results in a about a 100 pt penalty before the altitude drops so low as to be unsafe for a rolling finish. This penalty level is enough to encourage a normal arrival. KM
no penalty for low finish as long it is safe. Dont tread us as a students pilots, pls
unsure what is currently being used for a finish alt… i leave for a year and you guys muck it all up... plus i try not to finish low and never noticed what the penalties are.

7.5c
If you selected other, please specify the low finish penalty you favor:

0
0

2 minute penalty for rolling finish, same as 18M Uvalde Nats.

A12.2.5.1

Finish height is X, one foot below X is a landout. KISS. Let pilots exercise their discretion and add their own safety margins.

Graduated

I never had a problem with finish lines. If you fly or roll into the cylinder AND land on the airport, that's good enough for me.

Land out if below 200’ below floor per current rule. Constant tweaking of rules must be avoided unless a demonstrably better outcome can be shown!

No penalty for a safe arrival.

No speed points.

Not in favor of this.

Simply make 1mi Cylinder the FINISH.. no minimum height. Pilot must land on runway at field for speed points.

graduated penalty

land out

no penalty, just total lost of speed points.

unclear on what this question means. looks like 7.4

7.6c

Comments on Safety Finish Cylinder:

10 miles is way too small for Texas T-storms. Please don't encourage IFR flying; let the CD set the size. Disaster at Uvalde this year!

10 miles safety cylinder can be to small

200ft per mile is too much. Reduce to 150ft per mile.

Allow CD to set size. Maybe a few options or guidance

Allow a larger cylinder, maybe 20 miles. KM

Allow pilots to call Safety Finishes without penalties

At some point it makes more sense to cancel the day. Just because a safety finish is in effect doesn't mean everyone is guaranteed a finish.
CD should be able to specify based on contest location, wx, and alternate land out fields.

Claim is always that the safety finish is for a thunderstorm. A 5 or 10 mile radius thunderstorm is unusual I think.

Consider the size and also at what point it becomes an unfair at. The finish should be safe but you need to consider at what point it is too large and a finisher doing 20 miles less may have an advantage or disadvantage.

Give the CD more latitude.

Giving the CD the option of having a larger Safety Finish Cylinder size would make the problem of a large storm over the landing field safer. The larger size could be used only when the situation requires it.

Hardly ever used. What data do we have to support the suggestion?

Have been at one contest where the 5 mile safety finish cylinder was wholly inside a storm. CD needs the freedom to declare a safety cylinder any size.

I agree that it is too small - there may be other ways to handle this like "pausing the on-task time" for those directly effected by it or allowing for alternate scoring, maybe even cancelling the day if fairness is in question.

I am unsure of the curent radius, but if the home field is dangerous, the radius should be large enugh to clear the hasard.

I don't understand or know much about this rule

I fly in the east and haven't seen safety finishes used a lot. However, in Uvalde I wish we had a larger circle due to very strong storms.

I have flown in a contest where Once you enter the finish cylinder, the only safe landing possible is at the airport at the center of the cylinder. A larger radius would allow a finish will also allowing a landing in a safe location.

I think this topic has been explained very well at every contest.

If 10 miles is unsafe, we shouldn't be racing. Past that point, it makes the whole thing a crapshoot of where you happen to be. CD should call off the race when it becomes either unsafe or a total crapshoot.

If it's too dangerous to finish, I really don't want to final glide too close to the weather or where the weather is headed. Make it larger.

If the weather event is too big for the safety finish, maybe the task should be called off.

In Uvalde day 2 even 20 miles would have been marginal. At least 2 gliders got belly rash landing in the t-storm.

Increase the safety zone for a safety finish. The hard part might be if a safety finish is called, getting the word out to everyone. It's always good to revisit our rules and think through why we have them.

It's definitely too small east of the Mississippi River. Most soaring sites on this side of river do not have places to land at 10 miles of the airport. I think, it should be set to a maximum of 30 miles at the CDs Discretion. This a problem during the 18m Nats@Uvalde this year. The rain and storms started at 25 miles out from Uvalde and continued all of the way into the airport. We all tired to get around/through the storms; some made it, most did not. This was not a safety finish. Too many people took too many risks thinking, I can make it until it was too late.

Make the cylinder large enough to be safe in the expected conditions of the day.

Max flexibility for CD. Ie: "20 mile safety finish above 5000'msl"
My experience is that the larger problem is the failure of the CD to call a Safety Finish at all.

Never seen a problem with it as written, but I can imagine western storms where a 5-10 mile radius may not be large enough

Pure risk taking should not be rewarded.

RC should review all rules as a matter of course. In this case, allowing the CD more discretion seems reasonable. It is after all, a safety finish. In this case, the option of a safety finish gate/line (20 miles wide?) with a high floor might seem reasonable also so a pilot could fly around the weather to the side.

Radius could possibly be increased

See your comments

Seems mostly OK

Should be CD discretion on diameter.

Something simple that does not need complex cockpit math while on final glide in a thunderstorm.

The 18M class nationals experienced this first hand on several contest days.

The CD should have authority to set cylinder based on local Wx and terrain.

The idea behind the rule is sound. It should be modified to allow the CD the ability to expand the cylinder if safety concerns justify it.

The low finish penalty should be meaningful but not a daily score killer. It should not have a big discontinuity. The present rule seems to encourage stupid behavior when close to the discontinuity at 200' low.

The safety finish cone is too complicated. Few are interested in calculating the slope of the cylinder when it is actually needed -- Just make it a bigger cylinder - like 10 miles

The safety finish cylinder is often too small during west coast contests especially during large thunderstorms. Perhaps a movable finish cylinder would be an option. We have multiple start cylinders, maybe multiple finish cylinders would work. I would also like to consider some sort of pilot called safety finish to cover the event where the CD can't be contacted.

The safety finish is called to keep pilots out of the finish area! There should be a penalty for entering more than 500 feet inside the finish area that is same as an airspace violation

Use the current concept but allow sponsor to determine radius based on area & weather.

Uvalde was to small this year at 18m nationals

We can do 5 mi radius today I believe; can we do ten? Theoretically a 'constructive finish' -- if activated, scoring program finds a (the closest?) point on the final leg at an adequate height from which a finish can plausibly be presumed...

While I have not experienced a weather event that was not addressed by the current rules, I assume this has happened, and see no reason not to allow a CD to call a larger cylinder. It would be nice to get text messages in addition to radio calls about the safety finish status in case one is out of radio range.

I have never used one..but I read stories from Uvalde....holy shit im glad i wasnt there. I always thought if it was a big storm it wouldn't be sufficient.

If 5 miles may be too small, 10 is an option, do we need to make 15 an option as well for some sites?
maybe some slight size changes, but the bigger the cylinder the more potential for finishers coming from different angles. with the current size you can at least have a relative idea where to look for other finishing traffic, it also funnels the finishers into a common landing pattern (hopefully) rarely used. Leave as is.
this one is abused all the time they dont go to other airports. They keep pressing and get your reward. It has to be visible (like 180 deg) course change too safe field.

8.1c

Comment on Turnpoint Radius:

1 mile is small enough that everyone is going to the same general area and big enough to keep traffic apart. I also like the tactical decision of where is the best spot to turn.
A lot of gliders merge and stay inside cylinder for long period of time instead just touching and go on new curse
Again, the Europeans have a lower regard for safety issues when constructing contest rules.
Align US rules with FAI.
Align with FAI rules... and reduces distraction and head down time in the turnpoint.
Another means to separate/scatter the pilots.
Another tactical choice which I like.
Anyone who flew with cameras has probably had the experience of having a glider suddenly appear RIGHT THERE when we all aimed for the same point on the ground. Don't take us back there.
But acute turn angles should be avoided!
Compared to FAI rules, the current US rules require more tactical flying close to 1 mile turn-points in MAT & AT tasks, and make a place in the sky where gliders do unpredictable things. Also has the effect of reforming gaggles that had begun to split apart, as the fast guys go for an extra two miles and the slow guys turn early to stay in contact with the gaggle.
Current rule gives pilots credit when they make a smart decision to fly to an area within the cylinder that has lift (or better air). Removing the distance credit takes some of the pilot's judgment out of the scoring equation.
Current system is safer
Don't think it requires more heads down flying. All modern computers will signal when the turn point has been entered.
Doubt this really affects how US pilots perform at the worlds...
Eliminate MATs.
Eliminate the extra distance and move to a 1/4 mile radius, same as the FAI rules
Eliminates the effects of random soaring conditions at different points in time. Everyone's actual distance flown is much closer.
Especially on ridge tasks, having a 2 mile "window" helps avoid everyone turning in a very narrow/optimum spot. FAI always gives credit for more than actual distance pilot flew. Don't see why this is good.

Going to the back is an easy to "pass" people and still leech off of them. If we going to fly AT's let's do them for real. This is an area where FAI rules are meaningfully better. Also it is much safer when everyone knows exactly where the turn will be executed and you just follow everyone in sequence as you arrive at the optimum turnpoint. Conversely, with our rules you have significant opposing and crossing traffic within the one mile radius.

I don't think this has a big impact on fairness

IGC turnpoints encourage flying to a precise point on a small cylinder. This is an instrument procedure into a small target without even the predictability of all arrivals and departures from the same directions. The 1 mile cylinder eliminates the competitive reason for this. The only traffic concentration is to a marked lift source, as on course.

If we change it, reduce the radius to align us with the rest of the world.

If we eliminate the distance gained in the one mile turnpoint cylinder, we should reduce the cylinder to the FAI 500m turnpoint. Maybe ok for Nationals, not Regionals for reasons of safety.

In my opinion adding up distance in these small areas causes much more of a traffic conflict people criss crossing the small area. On an assigned task where everyone is aiming for the bisecting point of the circle, everyone is in and out of the circle very quickly. Not to mention that even though it's an assigned task you can't tell if you are gaining on someone because you don't know how far they've flown.

Leave the current rule as is please.

Make smaller as FAI. Clears TP area faster. Once anyone fly's the smaller area, they shall see the light! The heads down comment is false as software "beeps" and some makes noises when you enter the TP area. "Auto next" is also available on most software. NOT for MATs!!! For an AT, everyone knows where everyone is going and which way they will turn. much safer than

Once again, please get in line with the FAI.

Really indifferent. will fly the course as I see fit, within the rules.

Remain the same.

The 'con' is a non issue when Flarm becomes mandatory. Or consider the third option: use fai sectors instead, you're either in or out, but no additional distance is scored for the turnpoint goal.

The 1 mile cylinder provides needed traffic separation at the turn.

The Turnpoint radius rule deconflicts traffic and adds a nice wrinkle to the task tactics.

The current rule of AT and MAT turnpoints make it more like a 1 mile TAT and tends to spread out the traffic. It is also another contest tactic of picking the turn based on weather and course positioning that I enjoy and flying to a point on the cylinder with everyone else takes away that part of contest flying.

The reasons not to change seem persuasive to me.

This is a safety issue

This is useful in MATs to fine tune finish time
Whatever. I don't see either approach as superior safety wise. Concentrated traffic not a problem as long as everyone does the
same thing. Head down argument is lame in this age of flight computers with voice capability.
With the exception of the first turnpoint, the field should be spread out enough to avoid conflicts at the turnpoint.
Your question is totally misleading as 99% of you only know the US way. The FAI (racing) model reduces surprises with many gliders
turning at varied points within th cylinder creating a cross cross crash Zone. FAI is highly predictable and real racing and easier for
scoring. If you retain this as is, you're idiots.
it does its job of separating gliders from trading paint....i dont want to trade paint.
use actual distance achieved.

9.1c

Comments on changes desired to the current US Handicaps:

A more data driven system would be better than the "seems about right" method used to date. If we go to the european system we
would probably have to develop handicaps for many glider types not on their list. In 2016 the arcus handicap appeared to be way
too favorable at the sports class nationals in uvalde.
Again, an international sport should be using the same international standard. People flying OLC are already doing this!
Align with thw World

All handicap systems assume all the pilots share the same experience level. This attitude is dysfunctional and delusional. Pilot
experience should enter into handicap. By not applying a pilot handicap then we have whats been happening now as we see year
after year how a few top guys beat up the rest of the field. Not good for attracting or retaining entrant's.
Another case of NIH. Handicaps should be clearly based on European data (and not inverted).
Ask me again after we see the 2018 handicaps
Continue allowing Discus 2's and LS-6's in club class. Keep participation up and allows D2's to participate more in shrinking
Standard Class
Do not know enough about European Handicap system to comment
European handicaps are in flux at this time. Even so, standardization would help club class competitors that want to compete
internationally.
Handicaps need a major overhaul before we can do distributed contests. The age profile in the sport will likely make this necessary
in about 10 years.
I don't know what the Euro handicap system is. So I can't comment.
I favor this, but also hope IGC doesn't keep their new and crazy Club class list.
I love Peter Dean's approach much better.
I think after seeing the new FAI handicaps, it is obvious this is a
I think that many of the European numbers are seriously flawed. While no handicap system is perfect, the US handicaps have been proven over the years in contest flying and are modified when they are found to be incorrect.

I'm not aware of the differences. Since handicaps are weather-related to some extent, I suspect that the European handicaps work well for certain days and/or certain parts of the country and not so well for others. I'm a "home rule" guy: let us use what works best for us.

Indifferent for assigning handicaps, but retain US handicap range for Club Class.

It has to be better than ours, doesn't it?

KISS. Stop recreating your own wheels for everything.

Like - KISS

Maybe if it makes less work for someone?

Need more information on this one.

Need to compare the US to the European and publish those findings to the contest community for review prior to requesting comments or an adaption vote.

No real opinion on this issue

Not just no, HELL NO! Our handicaps are superior.

Not the latest unhinged handicaps from Germany please!

Notwithstanding the latest FAI handicap anomalies it makes sense to fly the same handicaps as the rest of the world.

OK but really don't care.

Only favor change if lines up with FAI.

Our HC System takes into account subtle difference that have meaning to performance that the Euro/OLC system does not

Publish the derivation/computations. Need to become transparent-might lead to improvements, eliminating most of the grumbling.

Gotta be straight-up.

So what difference does it really make?

Some sailplanes on SSA handicap list are just plain wrong. Something needs to be done. The SSA list can be adjusted.

Th only problem would be for home-built, experimental types that are not common in EU.

The European handicapping system is okay for Club Class, but not for Sports Class. It is unsophisticated compared to the SSA Handicapping system and does not adjust for wing loading. If used in Sports Class, it would give an unfair advantage to motorgliders, compared to the same type glider without iron ballast.

The IGC Club Class handicaps are really well tuned, especially the just published 2018 version which made some very major and wise adjustments!

The basket system of handicaps seems to work well, IE D2 and LS8 are the same. Discus, LS4 are the same. The current handicaps with 3 decimal places are ridiculous.
The European club class handicaps are very skewed currently.
The new FAI Club Class handicap is completely wrong! OLC is good.
The one BIG thing that bugs the shit out of me is that the big heavy two place ships always win at the Sports Class Nationals and Regionals. The Handicap is not correct for these Duo's DG 1000's Arcus's etc. This is not Correct.
The recently changed system is just bizarre. Carefully computed, then a huge, unscientific feel good compression of the handicaps. US handicaps need some work, particularly in application to ballasted classes as are becoming more common.
Their sport, their rules.
This is complicated, obviously. Not sure that a simple adoption of the OLC handicaps will work. I wasn't even able to find a list of the OLC handicaps - they point to the DAeC list which doesn't include some of the gliders that fly in the US. Adjustments for weight, water ballast, modifications? Perhaps start with a study of what other countries are doing. KM
This needs to be looked at by a large panel of experienced pilots so that any one glider doesn't get a disproportional advantage over another. I believe there are several gliders whose handicaps need re-evaluating.
We still need to iron out the question of handicaps for use with water ballast.
What about hcp's that take ballast into account?
Which European Handicapping System? The OLC handicaps gliders that may or may not have water ballast. The FAI club class list is apparently subject to the whims of a committee where we have no representation. No thanks.
Why not. Makes life a lot easier
allow turbo/motorgliders to use the same handicap as the non motored version of the same glider in FAI class contest allowing water ballast. Make two place gliders fly with the same crews or a base weight handicap in Sports class
here is all fixed by German pilots. compare the weights.
i like the weight adjustments up and down...I think ours is the less of most evils...barely ;)
nice to have local access to the handycapers
no opinions
pointless to have two systems. One favors some, the other favors some.
then i can't compete in my 20C in any class except sports class. and sports class isn't focused enough for me. i like the competitiveness and age group typically present at club class, and i don't feel that an ASW20C is substantially different from an A model. so that would really suck for me. i spent 400+ hours refinishing my 20 to make it cherry and set myself up for a long time with a glider in good condition, with lots of flexibility, which can compete in the class i want to fly in.

10.2c

Comments on contest length:

10 days is a bare minimum to be able to get enough days for a valid selection of a National Champion.
9 days Sat > Sun = 1 week of vacation is best.
A 10 day contest is too long for my tastes. I have elected not to go to any national level contests recently for this reason
A National Contest should be long enough to handle weather cancellations and give enough days to fairly test pilot's skill and endurance. WGC's are longer than our Nationals......
Allow contest manager to set 7-10
Already have a 2 day Nat contest & a 1 day Reg contest. If the weather does not cooperate the contests are turned into nothing more that a fun fly. And it is still called a contest.
Already ridiculous to recognize a 3 flying day national contest, and the odds of more of that go up with shorter contests.
As it is we barely get in some eastern contests; this will guarantee no-contests and REDUCE participation.
Big country like US should try some less popular contest east and west. Maybe Standard and 15m
Distance the contest has a lot more effect on if I will participate or not. Length isn't much of a factor one way or another for me.
Driving 2000 miles to short contest is not attractive
Dunno.
Every scheme for shorter contests misses the reality of travel and practice time needed.
I cannot comment on participation from other people, but it wouldn't make a difference to me.
I don't mind long but it's true many won't go because it's a full two weeks plus in many cases. I'm willing to lower the bar here.
I have helped organize a 3-day event every year for the last 7 years, which alternated between being a mini-contest and an XC-mentorship event. Even in years with good weather, we consistently got lower turnout in "contest" years than in years we did general XC mentorship. Although we got a couple of new folks to attend and give contest tasks a try at these events, over 90% of the attendees were already flying in normal Regional contests. Based on our experience, we stopped doing the 3-day contest format altogether and have concentrated solely on XC mentorship over the last 4-5 years, with great success. It was our direct experience that shorter contests did not bring out new (or less-serious) contestants much, nor did it draw a larger contest audience overall. Part of this can be traced to the fact that glider pilots are geographically dispersed and many pilots drive 1-2 days to attend a contest, and it is less appealing for contestants when their drive time is likely to be greater than their flying time!
I like giving the option to the organizers to hold an 8-10 day contest.
I like the long contests even thou it it harder for me to get away for that long.
I think it's binary. Either people can or can't take off 2 weeks for a contest. Shaving off a day or 2 won't matter. The real problem is drive time from the coasts.
I want to spend my vacation flying, not driving. If I drive two days each way I'd like to get more than a few contest days for the effort! Please don't make National contests shorter.
I would support reducing a contest to 7-9 days provided there is a provision for adding a day when not enough days have been flown for a valid contest.
In today's work climate, getting time off can be very difficult. Pilots need to make choices between family responsibilities and soaring.
It's a big country. The people who are serious about a nationals will show up. Shorten the length, and you will get a bunch of locals who will be in the bottom half.

Keep it 10 days long, otherwise it is not worth driving 1500-2000 miles and spending money.

Keep our current National winners uniform with the past. Stop this 3 day @ 95%.

**LEAVE AS AN OPTION**

Make it worthwhile.

Need more days in places with iffier weather.

No change, meaning retain the current options.

Only we retired folks can really afford long contests. Not a good idea if we want to attract younger pilots

Opinion: Align the contest to fit within a nominal vacation time frame of 1 week (9 days), both weekends and 5 days between

Participation is a factor of the overall membership level not contest length.

Reducing the length might result in more participation, but the present length increase the likelihood of having enough contest days to have a valid contest and is better for selecting US Team members. KM

Rest days shouldn't be started till 6 days have been flown. A early rest day ruined a national in Texas in 2016. We didn't fly any more after a early rest day.

Saturday-Sunday might help.

Selecting a national champion is important. Reducing the days might increase participation but pilots need to plan for a sufficient number of days.

Some pilots have to travel 6-7 days to contest sites and back, making it over two weeks vacation time for many.

Sure, reducing the length would probably increase participation. But the more days we fly the higher the likelyhood of the "best" pilots coming out on top, which is what we all want, right? And the bottom half of the scoresheet adds complexity to the tasking, markers on course, and results in bigger gaggles.

The big thing is to have a day off in the middle somewhere. I was at a regional at Nephi where we flew 8 days straight. Not to smart

The vast distances and short vacation times that are common in the US prevent "coast-edge" participants from crossing the country in the available time.

Time and cost ... Anyone ever takes the the percentage of pilots who are retired pilots flying in the Nationals? I'd bet its a large percentage. Encourage younger guys to participate.

To make it a competitive event with a range of WX, the longer event is more likely to select a champion. However, if it must be shorter, it would be best to keep it within a week.

Unless retired difficult to dedicate 2 weeks to a contest. 2 weekends + a week seems doable.

Use a 2week total vacation for basis for Nationals. Assume 2-3day drive each way plus practice days. I understand you want more days to account for potential weather days, but I'm finding I'm working more (not less) as I get older and more responsibility in my company. Even though I have the funds now to participate, I don't have 3 weeks to blow on a Nationals to use all the hard earned
vacation time.

Uvalde Sports Class Nationals 2016 - 4 Contest Days Cordele 15/Std/Open Nationals 2017 - 3 Contest Days Fewer scheduled days means fewer opportunities to make an official contest. You want to know what really dampens spirits? Driving all the way across the country and having a no contest. Having a few more people on the grid is not worth the risk of not naming a national champion.

Uvalde only had a few days. But driving across the county is a huge commitment. But then not getting in any days at Mifflin because you were only there for 7 days would suck too...

We should at least try the shorter nationals. 9 day option was good, make option for shorter. It will make volunteers easier to find = more sites. It will help attendance from pilots that have jobs.

Weather can really mess up a National competition reducing days. Keep the nine days to allow for more valid National competitions.

Weekend through weekend allows 9 possible days.

While I, as a retired guy would like to see a longer contest with better opportunity to weed out inconsistent fliers for US team rankings, I would rather have more buddies show up to the party. And my buddies all still have jobs. This gets them there to fly and drink beer with me.

You need a good number of days to get a reasonable opportunity to fly at least 6 contest days.

if you want people to race more - you need to take into consideration the US Vacation standards. Currently a normal working person can only do 2 contests a year. any one doing more is either unemployed/retired/self employed or a trust fund baby.

this is a huge country geographically. i dont want to drive 8 days total to get to montague, so that i can only be there for 7 days, with maybe 4-6 days of flying. it's good how it is.

10.3c

: Comments on ways to improve participation in National Contests:


Allow multiple National contests in various location, in a single year, to count toward a selection process for nation and international contest. I realize this is a challenge to get multiple venues to support a contest.

Bringing to Club Class Discus 2 and and LS8 and and ASG28 and(Ventus) was stupid. It was meant to kill Standard Class. PLs point me to the club having any of these.

Difficult. Mostly it's that we are running out of pilots.

Don't have so many classes. There used to be one, then 2, later three. Now there are how many? Eight? We probably have as many pilots flying Nats annually as we did ~35 years ago, but they are spread over more classes. And we have about 75% as many active glider pilots in the US. At the Regional level, the TAT and MAT helped participation: less chance of a landout.

Easy to say: We have some big successful contests that usually max out entrants every year. Copy them. Have Nationals at interesting sites known for great soaring weather at times when the weather can be expected to be great. That may not be consistent with picking U.S. Team members who can win a Worlds and it may not yield a realistic training venue for World Team pilots. So what? Nationals are already somewhat decoupled from Team selection so why make them all about the U.S. Team? Concentrate on making
the Nats interesting and fun. Pick the team based on points and hold Team camps like what was done at Cordele this past Spring.

FAI rules Better media Mandatory mobile phone and/or Flarm tracking (mandatory Flarm)

Fewer Classes?????? Fewer National Contests?

For Club Class use world criteria for qualifying performance gliders.

Fun is the key. AKA The Seniors

Get those of us that are still working more vacation time! lol

Have national contests in places with redeeming qualities that pilots and crew/family would want to spend their summer vacation.

Have the contests when the weather is good: June in Harris Hill, April/May in Cordele, June in Moriarty, second week of August for Uvalde, etc. Going a long way for shit weather is a problem. Keith Essex and Pete Alexander claim not to want to return to Cordele after this year's experience.

Have them in awesome soaring areas like Ely, NV, Nephi, UT, Minden, NV, Moriarty, NM, Salida, CO, etc. Combine with Miss America Pageant, judging the ladies on their ability to run a wing.

If it has good weather and most importantly a nice bar, I'll come.

Implement a east and west Nationals and determine how to deal with the legacy trophy fiasco currently in place.

Improve participation at Regionals first

In the Sports class nationals we have to change the handicap on the big two place ships, it simply is not fair as it stands. I am Not going to participate in the Sports Class Nationals in Nephi in 2018 because of this; I do not stand a chance in my LS3a with the current handicaps.

Keep them fun to fly in even when you're not in the hunt for a trophy.

Less time required. Juggling the demands of family, career, and sport are difficult.

Locations/weather is the most important

Make improvements to the social aspects of the contest. People need to cut loose in-between a hard day of flying.

More incentive programs and subsidies for youth...

More young chicks.

National events need to show more recognition to all entrants. All Cat 1 and Cat 2 should become members of the US Team. Then selection from this new group. More awards, plaques, recognition. Folk's like candy. Currently it's broken (not attracting) so the way it's being done needs change now!

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a JS-1C...

Reasonable contest length Reasonable task length

Reduced duration national contests far away will make me not attend. I will drive 1500-2000 miles for a 10 day contest but I will not drive for a shorter contest. Another important point. If contest start on Tuesday as it is now I can drive to a contest 1500 miles away, fly a contest for 10 days and come home within 2 weeks. This is perfect. However if a contest starts on Saturday and goes for 9 days I can't make it within 10 vacation days if the contest is 1500 miles away. Please keep the 10 day contest with a start on Tuesday.
Someone thought this through well long time ago.

Remove some of the classes through elimination or combination. We are "slicing the (contest pilot) pie" too thinly. Contests on either coast removes most of the opposite coast pilots. Try to entice and support sites that are more centrally located or enjoy large popularity (eg. Nephi or FL in the early spring).

Same as for all contests. We must provide an experience that you can not get via OLC. That means avoiding if possible large circle TATs and one or no turn MATs

Shorter contests.

The OLC events are leading the way. Combine a teaching, fun element say with individual coaching for new pilots. Recruit crew from the local soaring community and pair them with crewless pilots who want a crew. Reduce the number and complexity of the rules, they are starting to look like the tax code.

The biggie for many of us is travel time. There may not be a fix for this in a country the size of the US.

The few contests with high entry are due to the actions and planning of the sponsors. Look at the 2 o3 contest with high entry waiting lists & you will have an answer to the question.

Trust me - I know that it is hard to get bids for contests. Still really want to push for longer lead / notice times on contests. Try hard to take it back to 2 year notice so pilots can schedule better.

Try east coast and west coast nationals in some classes. The driving distances from east to west US is far beyond what other countries would ever do. How many Europeans would drive 3000 miles multiple times a year to fly multiple nationals?

Use more types of scored flight as qualification in national rankings including: OLC, Club contests that are ongoing over the season and sanctioned by the SSA, OLC rallies, record flights, etc. There are many ways of flying competitively nowadays and we should include them in ranking pilots

We need a 3 day format added that can get you ranked(which gets you included as a Comp Pilot). if Nationals (5 day min) = 100%
Regionals (3 day min) = 92% why not Local (2 day min) = 80%

We seem to be headed toward smaller Nationals oriented primarily at US Team training/preparation and selection, which is probably OK provided that the pilots who would otherwise have flown the Nationals are now flying more Regionals. KM

Would it help if contests could have some staff available to function as a Retrieve crew. Gets expensive and difficult to secure a crew for a National. Does lack of a crew prevent some people from participating? Maybe.

prize money and chicks. no really. that would work, but we are already doing something new that i think will prove effective that we need to continue. the junior camp/contest was a huge motivator, and saw a lot of participation this past year. a lot of those pilots were juiced on that event. we should keep it going each year, and try to grow it. in 10 years, you'll have a larger crop of younger competition pilots. throughout my twenties, i was usually the only competitor at an invent in my twenties, until i started going to club class. i think creating club class was a good move too on that note. look at the participation and age demographic at the club class contests. it speaks for itself. gliders are more affordable, and people are more likely to lend a kid an asw19 or a standard cirrus, than a 27 or a V2.

11.1c
Comments on team flying at National Contests:

1. Discourages contest participation: Team flying would give a big advantages to the pilots that can arrange for a team, which would most likely include the best pilots, thus making it harder for the rest of us to do well. 2. Safety: pair flying was allowed at a recent Seniors as a test, resulting in multiple pilots complaining about safety issues because the team pilots were not on the contest frequency. 3. Few benefits: if I remember correctly, team flying is being discontinued in about half the classes at the worlds, so even the excuse that practice team flying benefits US Team pilots is going away. Why reduce safety and a fair playing field to benefit about 1-2% of the contest pilots?

Again, if it lines us up with FAI, it should be considered. It would certainly increase participation.

Aligns with FAI
Better preparation for international contest and might improve participation
Carefull consideration should be given to scoring. Like lowest pilot score shoul be for both to address the huge advantage or will discourage other pilots
Clearly there were many teams flying in the 18m nationals. Logs need to be reviewed for clear instances of team flying. Its a big turnoff for flying Regionals and Nationals.
Don't call it "team flying." That implies you need dedicated teams. Call it "remove the ban on radio communication between pilots." There will be a lot of informal team flying and mentoring too.
Don't want to discourage participation from folks who fly nationals simply for the fun of it. Not everyone is looking to make it to the US team.
Encourage it at the regionals for national team members. Perhaps have some predetermined penalty for those pilots team flying so we don't leave the solo pilots at an obvious disadvantage.
Fading in the Worlds
For 20m 2 seater should be mandatory like in the rest of the World
Great fun to pair fly and it would make the US competitive again in WGC flying!
Happens already with the gang your with - or start behind.
I love team flying but the title of National Champion is an individual recognition. I'm ok keeping team flying at the regional level.
I would love to team fly at a Nationals but those pilots who don't have a partner may not go because they feel a big disadvantage.
I'm still a bit mixed on this but it depends on the decided purpose of the nationals. If it is for a US team selection, then team flying should be allowed and it allows the team an opportunity to practice in real conditions before a worlds. In either case, allowing teams to fly for ranking (but not the individual championship) or scoring them together and separately could allow this to work. (i.e. a national team champ and national individual champ)
If allowed, then everyone will have to be part of a team. Prepping for a world championships is not sufficient reason to throw out one of the primary principles of our competitions: i.e., may the best pilot win.
If international contests are going to allow team flying, we should too.
If it is considered desirable to encourage more new pilots to enter national contests then I think team flying works against this. I have seen a regional contest where two of the best pilots flew as a team and of course overwhelmed the rest of the field. This discourages new and less experienced pilots from participating.

If the National is designated to select a representative from the US to participate in the World, then learning and using team procedures is an important skill to have and practice.

Improves international competitiveness

In line with FAI rules until they change in 2020. We are picking a US team, we need to fly like it.

Internationally accepted, it should be done here since it is an international sport.

It is the only way to compete with international teams. Besides it increases skills and makes competition more fun

It occurs silently, eliminate barriers and sync with the rest of the world

It's great practice for international competitions and it's also fun.

It's already happening See Club Class See 15m See 18m No radio, but premeditated intent to team fly No question

I'm concerned if we allowed team flying at the nationals, it could discourage participation from some pilots because they would not feel competitive. Also, there is a possible change coming to the FAI Rules in early 2018 to limit the number of pilots in a class. Should we wait to see what the FAI does before we make this type of change?

Let pilots team fly, why not? It's fun as hell

MAYBE yes! It already occurs anyway silently. It would encourage a new dimension to U.S. competitions and prepare upcoming U.S team pilots for Worlds. Obviously, no radio team comms on 123.3

Makes newbies think they're at a big disadvantage.

May be the one "FAI Rule" that has the biggest impact on our performance.

Nationals are qualifications for the Worlds, weak pilot can have better result Only one spot for champion No radio restrictions.

Only allow for guests willing to forgo their National Ranking to practice for a WGC they are already qualified for.

People who have done it seem to like it. I can see the argument against it. I'm neutral on the issue. My yes is a weak yes.

Personally, I'd prefer team flying at nationals, but I think it would discourage a lot of pilots and lessen participation, so I voted no. If more regional contests encouraged team flying, eventually the balance might change.

Sarcasm. You got that now- Libelles and SCirruses following lower handicaps around the course.

Soaring is a sport for individual competition.

Team Flying currently only serves to benefit the pilots who will be attending the World Championships. Many National Contestants do not have "partners" they can practice team-flying with before the event, and so allowing this at the US Nationals would serve to give practiced team-flyers an inherent advantage. Furthermore, this attitude that "you need a team-flying partner" in order to do well at Nats would discourage even MORE pilots from attending Nationals, leaving attendance down to just a handful of the most-committed members of the sport.
Team flying is fundamentally unsportsmanlike. Rather than capitulate, the US should lobby FAI to end that nonsense. Team flying should be allowed at all regional contests and sports class contests. The rule is not "no team flying". It is no radio communication between competitors. FLARM easily allows team flying without radio communication so it is a little hard to control with FLARM unregulated.

This change would provide a real advantage to some competitors and a real disadvantage to others... It would force everyone to team fly - if one had to cobble up a team after getting to a national contest, one would be at a disadvantage.

This goes back to the purpose of a National Contest. I know team flying is important to doing well at the World's but U.S. Team candidates cannot populate a contest. The rest of us have to show up, too. I don't get my feelings hurt by getting beat by an individual pilot. However, coming in knowing that some of the pilots will have the advantage of team tactics chills my enthusiasm somewhat.

This has been part of contest flying in Europe for over 50 years. If we want to beat the Europeans in world contest we need to be able team fly effectively.

This would pretty well kill single pilot entries.

Those that wish to Team fly can practice anywhere/anytime they wish. At National events they can also fly as guest's. Our Nationals have been and should always be a test on individual soaring skill. These folks who wish to Team fly are just trying to move up the score sheet and not be tested as an individual. Major fear of reality.

We do it anyway. But discount seeding points earned by an individual for flying as a team

We should try this over a season and get feed back from the community. Team flying is harder to implement than discuss. What would be the reason for allowing team flying?

as guests preparing for a WGC

in line with world; our team members need practice. *Require* monitoring of 123.3 for safety if team flying is permitted (modern radios make this easy).

should also be allowed in Regionals

that's a tough one. i see the benefit, in terms of getting us in the mindset, and cultivating good strategies, tactics, and US team candidates, but it team flying would become mandatory for anyone who wanted to win.

12.1c

Comments on the contest pilot's package:


A few critical pages like contest contact numbers should still be printed.

Absolutely. PDF linked to the SSA Contest registration site.
Allow but leave it up to the organizers.
As long as it's made available in PDF format to allow it to be viewed on all devices
Does anyone really need that awful sheaf of waste paper?
Electronic is ok as long as I get it early enough to print what I need.
Fine with me.
Give organizers the option.
How much is 'significantly reduce'? 25%?, 50%, 100%? If the total fees drop by 50% or more then I would consider changing my vote. Note I stated ‘total’ fees, which include ssa fees, admin/paperwork fees, other fees? Would like to see the total drop.
I do not have enough information to comment on this. Please explain the cost now verses an electronic format.
I like paper
Just have the ability to print on site for those who are computer challenged..:-)
Less paper please
Lowers cost
Most of it can be electronic but things like maps are nice in paper. Leave it up to the contest
Mostly how it is now
Needs to be available by request if contestant needs paper copy.
No opinion. Leave decision to sponsor.
Not all CM's have the technical proficiency to do this. So it should be allowed but not required.
Not an issue as everyone seems to have internet and email access.
Once at a Nats., we received the package at the first contest day pilot's meeting. Bad for those of us visiting the first time. R7 is a PDFs off my web site - easy for me and complete for the pilots.
Pilots can ask for a printed package. Contest procedures could be written out and the rest distributed electronically.
Pilots that feel they need a paper copy should be able to print that on their own. Perhaps the contest organized can provide a printer at the venue for pilot usage.
Publishing electronically a good idea but only if option for printed package retained if requested 30 days in advance
Regardless of what the pilots say, this change needs to be made for the benefit of the organizers. KM
Simple change - do it
Simplify for organizers whenever practical.
Since almost everyone should be able to access the information online, there is no reason to provide the package in a printed version.
Sure... why not distribute ahead of time?
This has been done at Nephi for the OLC events and it works fine. Allow for an administrative penalty for the pilots that do not read the material. This has been done at several contests I've been to i.e. Nephi to good effect. Let's save the contest organizers money. We did this at the Region 3/ Junior Camp. And handed out paper copies as well. Downside, pilots won't read emailed docs. But they don't read paper either. We should be using technology whenever and where ever to help control costs. I have been requesting digital version of Soaring for 10 years to cut the costs of production! Whatever is easiest for contest organizers. Why not! Who needs all the paper! maybe task cards for MAT's..because everyone is going to forget to print those. sure - saving money is good try this at regionals. require a printed copy be available at office.

13.1c

Comments on changing the website:

???
Contests are already often listed before sanction is approved. Listing multiple bids would need to be done carefully, differnt than the current calendar, to avoid confusion.
Do not care much about this issue. Don't really care.....
Get a real password instead of having to use membership number. Who remembers these numbers? I'm webmaster for the Arizona Soaring Association - I'll help! Helps me plan my vacation
I am reluctant to make more work for the webmaster, but likely it would be good for everyone involved if the site selection process were more transparent.
I assume both organizers and contestants would benefit from a more open exchange of information about who might attend.
I don't think there are enough bids currently to do this. Organizers and SSA should withhold until firm to avoid disappointment - if someone wants to know before it is official they can ask.
If the bids can be considered by all pilots it may allow a site to post a poll to see if there is sufficient interest to meet the financial cost of running the contest.
It would be instructive to the membership. Especially those with interest in hosting a contest at a new site.
It would be nice to know who is bidding on a given contest
Let's members know what is going on and may encourage clubs to get involved
Many of us have to schedule a year in advance.
More communication is always better.
More transparency is good plus we need about a year of planning to take two WEEKS vacation so the earlier the notice the better.
Needs a lot of help.
Neutral.
No opinion
Overall the process of entering into a contest and administering a contest could be improved with revisions to the website. The need to print out paper forms and sign & supplement them with hard-copies of information is a burden on contest organizers. The work to allow basic entry submittal and to pull contestant lists from the website into Winscore are worth celebrating and applauding! But more could be done to lessen the friction for both entrants and contest organizers.
Sites can see what their competition is or there is an open contest.
Sounds like a good way to get pilot feedback
Sounds simple, full transparency
Sure. I think this would allow better contest planning for contestants.
The website is outdated and its appearance wouldn't pass muster with any large company's marketing department. We need to find ways to entice more clubs to host regional contests for beginners and increase the size of the pool of national contest sites.
This could generate advance interest and support.
This would improve general awareness of contest pilots regarding potential contest events.
What volunteer will be taking this on?
Why not? Its not a big deal.
Won't hurt but I don't think it will make much difference.
Would greatly help the contest community to plan there participation.
You don't need a bunch of pilots thinking they have a say on what site gets what bid. Let the site selection committee do their job. Publishing contest sites and dates that are not approved will just lead to confusion. Set sites far enough ahead of time to let people plan their vacation time.

a more comprehensive calendar of events would be cool too, to include international events taking place abroad
also change SSA web page for events to list all events by default, not just contests. This could help everyone trying to host events.
sure - more info the better
Comments on Airfield bonus for motor gliders:

1000 feet is already too low for safety in many motor-gliders, leave this alone...
1000 ft negates the motor advantage, i.e. getting home for dinner!
1000' is fine.
500 seems too low as it leaves little time for an air start or to deal with an issue, that said, 1000 is high for many types of motorgliders
500' agl is a much more realistic altitude and is perfectly safe if the engine does not start. With the current rule, I personally ignore the airport bonus and go for the save thermal, starting the engine over a landable field only if unsuccessful.
500' is probably the floor for most everyone without a motor to abandon the task and land. This should be the same for a motorized glider.
A non-motorized glider should have a "hard deck" significantly higher than 500 feet agl.
AB only if they land their and trailer home.
Airfield bonus for motor glider only if they land at the field. None for starting in the air.
Airport could be 20 miles away at the the low point. Engineless gliders have no chance to make the airport. So the glider with the engine gets points that a engineless glider has no chance to get those points
Currently an example of arbitrary rules replacing personal responsibility
Depends on if you want to enforce a safety issue. However a lot of non motor pilots will thermal much lower than 1000' so there is some kind of fairness thing.
Gasoline, Jet, and electric motors required different decision making.
How about 800' AGL?
How far from the airport must you be at 1000'?
I don't think motor gliders should get airport bonuses unless they land there.
I fly a motor glider. At this time we should not encourage motor gliders to attempt an engine start below 1000. technology is changing. A FES equipped glided may safely be able to airstart below 1000 ft. but for the majority of the existing motor gliders its a real safety risk even if you are over an airport.
I have never flown a motor glider, so I am not qualified to answer this question, really.
I think 1000' is too conservative
I think 500' is too low. I would be ok with 800' as the pilot should be starting at that altitude to be safe in normal situations and not thermalling at lower altitudes.
I'm not a MG pilot (yet), so maybe split the difference and say 750? I understand the delimna for they can't scratch as low going into a landout versus the safety factor for if it doesn't light they're committed.
If a motorglider gets below 1000' AGL, they should be able to glide to a safe landing without needing to pop the motor out. Don't
encourage ultra-low engine starts, where you are introducing mechanical complexity and lots of pilot distractions at the exact time when a spin or other small mistake can have severe consequences. K.I.S.S.!

If pure gliders are allowed to have low saves, then motorgliders should be allowed the same opportunity, subject to some distance from the airport.

Just keep the competitive cost of getting an airport bonus the same as for a pure glider. Need to deviate to an airfield as a glider prior to engine start to get the bonus. I don't care how low they go before starting at the airport, just that they have the same points tradeoff between the bonus and more miles.

Latest electric start and FES systems for turbos allow safer starts at lower altitudes.

List proposed and approved contests.

May increase pilot workload when low to the ground and will encourage motorglider pilots to try to thermal away from airports at low altitudes, both of which have the potential to decrease safety. Want to encourage pilots to make safe decisions...

Maybe 750 as a floor..but 500 is too low unless it's a FES electric. There is too much disparity in power systems. A 500 ft. for old solo systems might invite disaster if the engine does not start.

Maybe lower to 750ft? Lowering to 500ft extends an already existing advantage and could be unsafe in some places if engine doesn't start and pilot gets distracted by that.

Motor gliders already have significant, unfair advantages. Why give them more.

Motor gliders get airfield Bonus? If your a self launch you should have to LAND their like the rest of us. if your a turbo then 1000 feet. Low starts are not a good idea to encourage.

Motor gliders should collect airfield bonus in the same manner as a pure glider.

Motor gliders should not get the airfield bonus if they start the motor at all. They should be scored as a land out at the point the motor was started, no bonus at all.

Motor on a stick MG's have a sad history of failed starts, bad landings, and crashes following low start attempts. FES drivers not withstanding, let's not force greater risk on the MG pilots.

Motorgliders don't have to start their engines at 1000'. They have the same option non-motorgliders have, to land on the airport and get the bonus. They have the additional option to thermal lower, start their engine, and forgo the airport bonus.

Motorgliders have advantage getting home and will take more risk if bonus lowered to 500'

Motorgliders should not be given an airport bonus. They already have an advantage each day they compete against a pure glider.

No motorized glider should be trying to start an engine below 1000' agl and no pure glider pilot should be trying to thermal below 1000' of a field.

No restrictions on motorgliders unless it is stated no thermalling below that height as well.

Not qualified to answer.

Perhaps 800 feet, but NOT 500 feet. Depending on the motorglider, 500 feet with the engine pylon out could cause serious landing issues if the engine doesn't start.

Safety concerns warrant requiring that 1000 is the minimum. If the motor does not start at 500' with the motor deployed the pilot is in
big trouble. If he has electric power, probably not so.

Safety dictates a margin. Just like finishes, 500 minimum will result in accidents when arriving at 350 feet and trying to start and failing...

Safety first.

Safety issue
The Airfield Bonus was intended to increase safety by motivating pilots to landout at an airport instead of a field. If a motorglider doesn't actually land out, why should it this bonus?

The altitude a pilot starts a motor is similar to the altitude a pilot stops soaring and lands. We regulate one but not the other? Using 500’ is a reasonable restriction. I'll be starting my motor higher but if I have a long paved runway under me, I have another option.

The bonus is pretty insignificant - making altitudes lower is not safer.

The motor glider should be safely in the airport landing pattern when starting the engine.

They can land at the airport too...

This is tricky - some newer Motorgliders seem to start easily and older ones seem less reliable. Safety first

This limitation only applies on a percentage of days where the motor guys need their motor. They often fly far more aggressively over harsh terrain as a matter of course.

To many variables, lets play it safe. Don't put extra pressure when something goes wrong pls

Why not require them to land for a bonus?

err on the side of safety please.

motor is actually a disadvantage in weak conditions. 500 makes it more realistic

no opinion

the whole thing is silly...

they are already flying home and not trailering....bastards...but im not sure we want to lower the engine start altitude, from a liability standpoint, becuse we are then saying, hey its safe to start at 550 ft over an airport...when in fact their ass should be on downwind to base...hopefully preparing for a landing....

14.2c

: Other Motor Glider issues or comments:

Apply the 500’ agl floor to a relight by use of the engine rule as well. Test/maintenance engine runs before the start: Safety demands a daily start of a sustainer or self launch engine before going out on course, especially if there is a chance of a low altitude start while on course. This is necessary to eliminate gas bubbles in the fuel lines and to improve the chances the engine will start quickly if needed. On weak days, descending to release altitude after a test engine start may create difficulties climbing away again for the
start, and weak days are when the probability of needing the engine is higher. Many pilots forgo the test start on weak days when it is most needed! Suggestion: allow test/maintenance starts at any altitude with the requirement that engine run time be limited to one minute and that the sailplane return to the engine start altitude in the same area as the engine start within five minutes. Limiting test runs to within three miles of the home field is ok as long as this can be increased by local waiver for sites such as Minden, Parowan or Mifflin, especially on weak days.

Bunch of cry babies...

Contest launches would go quicker if self-launch capable gliders self-launched. But with the current rules, self-launching is not worth the risk to many self-launch capable pilots. For example, if one has trouble retracting the motor (always a possibility) and has to restart the motor to get back to release altitude, the pilot has to wait 15 more minutes before starting the task. If there is interest in getting more gliders to self-launch to speed up the launch process and reduce the need for tugs, I expect it would not be too hard to come up with changes to encourage self-launches.

For gliders with engines that do not self launch, i.e. gasoline, jet and FES, I would like to see a reworking of the engine start rule. It is a safety issue to start the engine for a short while before starting the task. A more reasonable rule would be to allow thermaling up several thousand feet above release altitude (assuming that thermals that allow that are available) and within the start cylinder or say 5 miles of the launch point. The engine start and run should be limited to less than 2 minutes with no appreciable gain in altitude (say 200 feet). The 15 minute delay to start after engine test should also be eliminated.

If there is self-launching during contest, require clear traffic area for MG climb-out and shut-down near the field with no other traffic. Brief pilots on the danger of trying to circle under an MG with a pylon extended! I self-launch when asked, but this gets quite hazardous if not planned and briefed in advance.

Imagine I have two identical gliders, one with a motor and one without. The glider without is loaded up with fixed ballast to have the same weight as the motorglider. They have identical performance. Why do they have different handicaps? This makes no sense.

In competition the advantages of motor gliders are evened out by the disadvantages. That is the way it should be. Trying to remove or ameliorate the disadvantages is counter productive to the objective of fair competition.

In the future we may want to have new rules for FES type gliders. In a all FES group we could just give point penalties for the time the FES in operated rather than declaring and outlanding.

MG pilots like to point out the disadvantages that having a motor brings into contest flying and they claim that the disadvantages completely outweigh any possible competitive advantage. What is remarkable is that they can say it with a straight face. Fly a task at any contest site with mountains or other areas of unlandable terrain with signs of better lift and you'll see the MG pilots go straight into those areas at the first opportunity. FES is only going to make that behavior worse. Eventually, there will have to be some reckoning done to adjust for the MG advantage or all of us pure glider schmucks will go take up something less expensive and less hazardous. Opioid addiction, maybe.

Motor gliders can continue into unlandable terrain or poor soaring conditions knowing that if they can't continue thru, they can start the engine. If I get caught low over unlandable terrain, I have a wreck if I can't climb.

Motor gliders in all contests should have to tape there motor doors shut and therefor disable there motors, lets keep things fair and then the tug pilots make more money.

Nope.

Publicise the fact that jets don't often start in the rain.
The rest of the world has adopted motor gliders as a normal part of the sport. The numbers of gliders with motors is growing in this country. We need to abandon the punitive mindset some people with outsized influence on ours rules seem to have against motor gliders. Risking landing a $150,000 glider in a farm field is not a sustainable situation from either an insurance or legal perspective. (yes we need to do a much better job of not wrecking motor glider as well) I wish we could all go back to flying Std. Cirruses or whatever but times change.

15.1c

What ideas do you have to make contest flying more attractive to new participants?

A semi-separate category and recognition for those just starting in contest flying. The GTA series has "A" class for the old hands and "B" class for the new folks. The tasks are usually identical or very similar for both classes so the new guys can follow the experienced racers. The difference will be in task time and maybe cylinder diameter depending on task type. As for recognition, maybe a picture page, like the winner’s page, of everyone who flew their first contest during the year could be published in SOARING.

Adoption of "FAI" rules is really about becoming a member of the global soaring community. One aspect is FAI start, finish, tasking and scoring formulae. At least as important are: 1) integration into FAI ranking for all contest participants. 2) Computation of ranking that provides a meaningful number to a regional level pilot. 3) Visibility of US contests on say soaring spot. 4) Rationalization of handicaps with European handicapping systems (there are multiple).

Allow pair flying!

As much mentorship as possible at the club level to get people ready to try contests. It is important to mentor at contests, but this is only one place to use mentors. It would be best if new racers were mentored at home and the at the contest site once they decided to compete. A new contest pilot should be prepared at his/her home site for before an actual event.

Assigned task promote more fun contest soaring than turn area task

Consider expanding the junior contest rebate program to either a) encompass all pilots flying their first contest and junior pilots at any number of contests or b) expand the junior contest rebate program to encompass a larger age range (say under 35), at least for pilots flying their first contest. There is a relatively sizeable number of pilots who could be classified as "young professionals" with the skills to fly a contest who need a nudge in the right direction.

Emphasis on fun, openly share knowledge with newcomers.

Extend the buddy system to start before the contest to get new participants better prepared and psyched for the contest.

Family friendly locations.

Fewer rules and less complexity. Shorter Nationals. More fun, teaching moments. Recruit a crew option from the local soaring club or area. Have the fastest and the slowest give the morning talk. Improve the mentor program to before the contest starts. If you are mentored with Hank when you signup for the contest you are already on the way to success BEFORE you show at the contest - and you show up.

Find a national sponsor. Red Bull, Boeing, etc. Be viewed on TV if any way possible.

First there was just one Nat contest. At some point the 1-26 pilots started there contest (in place of regattas). After at lest 3 years of...
fighting we finally got a Standard Class contest. This was almost immediately followed by the 15 M contest. Then the motorglider pilots got their contest class (interest in this class has diminished due to being allowed to fly in the FAI classes). Then along came the Sport Class contest where you flew what you brought (with Handicap). Now we have added 18 M class & 20 M class. Occasionally a 2 place class. And we cannot forget the Club class. Is it not obvious why participation in each class has diminished? With all of these classes there is no way to increase participation in any one class without eliminating several other classes. The only way for sponsors to have a larger total entry is to have several classes (at one time) at one contest site. This is being done.

Focus on Regionals to attract newbies. Heavy emphasis on XC and racing training and mentoring, and social activities (Perry and New Castle are shining examples, but there are others as well). KM

Free beer

From comments above. 1. Would be great for spectators and crew to have real time tracking. This would generate a lot more interest in contests. 2. Have contests in places with redeeming qualities that pilots and crew/family would want to spend their summer vacation. Especially in regional contests having a strong social element.

Good CD’s and wise task advisors.

Good tasking, no MAT in Nationals

Gosh I wish I knew.

Hello SSA, maybe best to return to contest reporting as done in the mid 70’s when the membership was at a all time high!

Here are a few ideas: 1] More (and better publicized) monetary incentives for new contestants (i.e. cover some of their entry fee). 2] A special award for the highest-finishing first-timer (i.e. give the newbie something to try to win, even if they don't think they can hang with the hot pilots at the contest. BTW, given people jockeying for handicap advantages and spots on the Worlds team, the Sports class is not a "first-timer" class). 3] Start up some kind of formal "contest mentor" program and post the contact information & location of mentors up on the SSA website. This would give folks who are curious to try contests can actually call or email someone with experience and get good advice and info & support.

Hold East and West Nationals. The long travel is helping to kill the sport. having East and west contest would not require more contests, only more selective contests with 15 to 20 gliders in a class. Hold on with Us rules and one with FAI rules to start. One of the goals is to make the US more competitive at the worlds, more contest flying will help US pilots that are willing to fly both.

I do not have any.

It should start with youth flying. The US Junior event is a great start. Make an incentive for older members to lend juniors their glider and have two seat mentors at contests. Let the kids be kids and encourage the after flying beers. Its amazing how the Australian, British, Dutch, French and German junior communities have developed by having big parties at the contests and local clubs.

Keep it simple. Not everyone reads through the rule books.

Keep the costs down for regional contests. Price as base fee (to cover fixed costs) + tows.

Let’s advertise that mentors will be available for new contest pilots. They will talk strategy before the launch and review flights after. During weather days the contest can have experienced pilots give a talk about the rules and/or answer questions. Getting a pilot to his first contest or a new site should help increase participation.

Make contests more interesting to spectators: require good live tracking, and regular (at least once a day) social media and SSA web site updates. I suspect pilots are more likely to come to contests if they can convince their spouses, who in turn are much more
likely to be interested if they can see how the race is going while it is happening. Here is an example of MANDATORY TRACKING from the HG/PG folks, quoted from http://ozreport.com/blog.php: The Highlights of the CIVL Bureau Minutes 7. 1 Live-tracking The Bureau agreed that a fleet of live-trackers should be bought and used in the coming 2018-2020 Cat 1 events. There will be no charge for the use of the CIVL live-trackers in Cat 1 events. It will be mandatory for organizers to use them according to the CIVL criteria...

Make regional sports class contests friendly to beginners and Juniors. Assign mentors to beginners like they do at BRSS. Ask 30-40 somethings who participate in contests what their ideal contest would like. Consider sanctioning weekend only contests that span over 2 weeks (maybe add a Monday and a Friday so a person only has to burn 1-2 vacation days to achieve 5 or 6 possible soaring days).

More Low Performance contests. Shorter tasks with closer turnpoints.

More acknowledgement by the CD recognizing the new participants, putting them in the spotlight, facilitating them to become a part, not one looking in.

More cross county, competition training and U.S. team camps. The discussions and seminars at the U.S. Team Camp Cordele was inspiring and motivating. I think newer pilots eyes would be opened to the experience of other's contest flights by reviewing World Competition flight records.

More emphasis on mentoring. KS had a newbie contest at Mifflin in 2002. It was great.

More groupies

More in a separate thread. See the study I did a few years back. Hint: It's NOT the rules.

More opportunities. In the west its often 1000 miles or more to the closest contest. Encourage and advertise a combined rookie school with daily classroom time to help with basics early working up through competitive techniques at the end of the event. This is best organized amongst participating pilots, not an extra problem for the organizers.

More young chicks.

Most important question in the whole list. My suggestion is to provide better instructional talks for newcomers as part of each contest day. When I've won days at regionals and had a chance to talk, I've tried to use it as a teaching opportunity or a short seminar. It was well received by newcomers and generated complaints by some more experienced pilots. I think its an important step and should be encouraged.

No Idea, Contest glider flying is really only for a very few. It is a total loner sport that is expensive, hard to learn and can really end in disappointment when things go poorly.

Normal stuff that has been talked at length before. - easier rules - fly more (less time waiting on the grid) - more on site activities (bbqs, scheduled talks after dinner, etc) The typical 'meet, wait, grid, wait, wait some more, fly 2hrs, land, disperse' model is becoming old. It doesn't foster newcomers learning or further involvement. The 'old friends aren't taking the time to make new friends', causing isolation and more than likely rejection of the newcomers.


Record daily winner speech and compile into a magazine article for each contest. Rookie trophies. 3 day weekend "Mini Regionals". Seek out ex-fighter pilot/current airline pilots and give them a backseat ride during a Regionals. Low level finish line. Junior Class in every Regionals with no cost entry.
Sailplane frackers, more comradely. Bigger push for contests to individual clubs.

Shorten Contests! The two weekend in a row is a great one. For local area contestants it only requires a couple of days off work, not a whole week!

Soaring is a tough sport: it takes a long time to learn, costs way too much, requires too much time, is entirely too dependent on weather, is not very family friendly, is unforgiving of errors (in points and safety), and I could go on. I have been an occasional critic of the Rules Committee/Contest Board in the past because of what I perceived to be a tendency to eagerly allow/adopt new technology without due consideration of their full impacts or cost (e.g., clock cameras, GPS loggers) and attempts to almost continuously tweak and tune the Rules to make them perfect, which resulted in bugs in the scoring system. But I applaud their performance in recent years on all accounts. I think the steps taken to keep older gliders competitive (e.g., Std. Class handicaps) and the more cautious positions on newer technologies are great.

Spread the word about the free beer from the Papa 7 Brewery.

Stress that it is not necessary to have expensive gadgetry to participate.

Task weekends to simulate contests. I think the schedule discipline and launch may be a bit daunting to newbies--they don't want to be the one that screws thing up.

The OLC class tried at New Castle was a good idea, but gained low participation. Keep trying it. Hold more cross country camps concurrent with or just before regional contests.

The decline in contest registrants has nothing to do with the attractiveness of contest flying. We are not making as many new pilots as we did before, therefore the pool has shrunk. Baby boomers are rapidlydeclining and there are very few young pilots joining the sport, many more contest classes and the lack of new blood exacerbates the situation further. No matter how many times we rearrange the deck chairs or how bravely the band plays the Titanic will succumb to the flaw in its construction.

Think about what is the easiest way to transfer an OLC pilot into contests. Maybe we are hanging on to our legacy too long and making things too complicated for them. Simple start cylinder, last exit point (all surfaces) with 2min under top rule. TATs because we want to have some control of where folks go for several reasons. Finish cylinder, first entry point (all surfaces). Handicap and score like OLC. KISS

This is the primary reason for 1-26 rules. Suggest simplifying as much as possible, and take a look at the the 1-26 rules for other ideas. I realize this is counter to my desire to move closer to the FAI, but its in context for this question.

Too many classes supported , not enough folks to support all this .

Tracking, events, new locations. Possibly look at easier access to nationals if they've flown OLC, local area or club type contests instead of ranking.

Trying to regulate gaggles and leaching does not encourage less-than-competitive participants.

Updated, thorough, more publicly promoted guide written as if it was being used by first time contest pilots.

We have a few clubs in the country that hold or encourage local contests. I think we should have a calendar to post these local contest (with the club's permission) to allow more small contest participation that may be less intimidating than a regional.

We have to align with the rest of the world. If we like to change ,we have 2 reps at IGC to help. Damage is done, let fix it gradually, so we don't piss old timers.

Welcome new participants by acknowledging their fears and apprehensions. Do so with a new-by briefing before the start of the
contest.

While traditional contesting is still very popular, you cannot ignore the popularity of OLC. Many pilots want to participate in an organized event to share in the commaraderie of being with other soaring pilots but may not want or be capable of the competitive spirit needed to fly in todays contests. We have had record lows in participation at contests for various reasons. We need to attract participants in order to build our ranks with both new and old blood otherwise our sport will die. "Fun Fly" events such as Nephi (when was th last time you had 65 pilots show up for a regional and had another 20 on a waiting list?) and OLC camps attract pilots and have the potential to grow our sport much more than a nationals that is cancelled because of the lack of interest. PLEASE SAVE OUR SPORT !!!

Why not find sponsors to give real prizes that are meaningful? A bottle of wine or a new battery is nice but how about $5,000 or a new car? I think you might find a whole new level of interest by both participants and spectators.

Would it be possible design a season long national contest using the OLC design? We have a lot of new pilots very interested in OLC flying. OLC meets are becoming very popular. If we could somehow blend the OLC and contest flying maybe we could attract new participants.

eliminate AHRS restrictions. They reduce safety.

encourage cross-country pilots to fly with a competent contest pilot in a two seater; I went with Karl and decided it was awesomeness... How many people had this chance and got the bug for racing? there should be a magical duo discus that travels the country going from US Team pilot to pilot... the team members are required to fly in regionals with dopes as part of "team participation", the dopes get the racing bug and more dopes go racing, and more people go to nationals

have two classes within the same category.

more XC camps, better coverage of contest in Soaring and on line, encouragement of the FAI and Sport classes. local contest. Anything to reduce cost and bring the older cheaper gliders back into the sport. The market for a $50,000+ glider is getting smaller and smaller. Look at the number of ASW 27s going unsold in the $75,000 plus range. Where did all the Discus, LS 8s ASW 24s Std. Cirruses etc. go in the contests. The owners of these are the guys and gals we need to attract to contest flying. task to get them around, nothing will bring someone into contest flying like a successful final glide and nothing will drive more away than spending your money and vacation dragging your glider out of fields. maybe develop some sort of equipment pool to lend loggers etc. to new participants and some volunteers at the beginning of the contest to help the new guys (and some of us not so new) how to work it.

more learn to race races. split weekend races.

more teaching / education opportunities / seminars. Have winning pilots give a play by play seeyou discussion of their decisions in evenings or rainy days for example. More use of projectors/hdtv screens to show weather data, instead of just a verbal report. More use of social media - maybe make all postings to SSA reports automatically be posted in Facebook also?

you can double the participation tomorrow - if you allow Pilots to talk to their crew on the ground. "Participant" should not be restricted to "Pilots" Because I purchased a 2 seat glider and added my wife as a nonflying co pilot - we now talk about soaring more than ever - because she is involved. Any thing we can do to involve more people and make them feel engaged.... will help soaring. The worry that a ground crew will advantage one pilot more then another....... who cares.
Comments on other issues you would like the Rules Committee to consider at the 2017 meeting?

1. Eliminate the minor airspace violation - it's mostly pointless. 2. If an electronic finish line is going to be used, there needs to be a small penalty for a small miss. The combination of GPS position error and EEMMSSS to DDMM.mmm conversions can account for 50 feet (width of a runway) easily. 3. Steering turns (when required) for MATs should be 2 mi. 1 mi (especially out West) just moves the pile of debris off the airport. If no steering turn encouragement should be given to 2 mi cylinder.

Add a question to the next poll asking whether pilots want to eliminate the "Short MAT". Most pilots I talk to seem to dislike it, because of the special tactics involved and the heads-down programming time. Here is a quote from an article in the Sept/Oct 2017 Hang Gliding and Paragliding which you might want to consider for sailplane races: "we should also encourage the establishment of a quasi-professional coterie of accredit meet organizers and meet directors that clubs can draw on to help run their own events, thus providing these clubs with the required service and experience, while rewarding those qualified individuals for the hard work they put in" Reduce WinScore bugs: I keep hearing that, despite the SSA paying for WinScore, numerous bugs have caused much grief and wasted a lot of time for scoring volunteers. As an example of the software's bugginess, there were at least 20 bug fix versions of WinScore this year alone. I'm told there is no formal testing or software acceptance procedure. An industry standard software quality assurance program would likely go a long way to improving the situation. I suggest that, out of fairness to scoring volunteers, the SSA commit some time and funds to correcting this in the future. Dedicated contest frequency: earlier this year I heard the Government Liaison Committee would work to try to make it easy for contest management to get a dedicated frequency, like the ones assigned to Sun n Fun, AirVenture, and other air shows. If this has already been done, it would be nice to give credit to those who made it happen, as it could have significant safety impacts in areas where 123.3 gets so jammed with endless flight training radio calls we cannot count on communicating with other competitors. If this project was not started it would be good to prioritize it. I suggest you notify pilots of the poll by e-mail. I receive SSA newsletters and checked my spam folder, but did not receive any e-mail notification of the poll, I only heard about it on RAS. I expect some pilots eligible to vote do not read RAS. If I need to change something in my SSA profile to get e-mails about the poll, please let me know what to do, as I did not see an option for this.

Encourage CD's to use the TAT planning tools in Winscore - to keep the turn areas no bigger than needed. It now calculates and displays the minimum and maximum speed possible for the TAT. This can be used to make the range of speeds more practical such as bracketing 50-70mph for a day instead of huge circles that allow for pilots to fly noncompetitively in widely different areas and speeds of 18-95mph.

How can we allow pair flying in Nationals and Regionals. A part of the answer is to require dual frequency monitoring ... What are the other issues? Let's make a list of them and come up with solutions and alternatives for review in next year's poll. Pair flying will make contests a lot more fun and help develop newbies. It is not just a matter of training US Team pilots for the Worlds...

I have been a regional contest scorer for the last three years. I have seen the expectations of the pilots (read that, demands) rise with regard to the turnaround time and online availability of scores. Using WinScore, and the sometimes erratic internet at the contest sites, really increases the workload of the scorer. I think a centralized scoring app, with easy upload of IGC files (maybe even from a cell phone app) would make the scorers job easier. That may encourage more individuals to take on the task, whereas now CDs and Contest managers often have trouble filling this important contest position.

I think Club Class is a growing group and has many younger pilots. I believe the handicap range from a Libelle to LS-6 is keeping with the spirit of the class and maximizes the number of pilots that are eligible to fly in the class. I feel that the 15 meter wingspan is restrictive. The FAI includes the 16 meter Standard Cirrus but we kicked out the Open Cirrus which is probably closer in performance than an LS-6? Turbulator tape handicap adjustment should be removed. Too hard to keep track of for organizers and cheap to add unlike winglets.
I think there has been a lot of noise about changing to FAI rules, but am interested to find out the depth of the interest. Personally, I think US Rules should be tailored to encourage participation in US Contests. I know that several pilots favor switching to FAI rules to enable US Team Pilots to "fight like they train", but I think that a switch to FAI rules while helping a few Team Pilots practice for their international contests would result in fewer participants in US Contest overall.

I think world rules thing is a red herring. It might be some kind of problem if not prepared for. However what I think the big issue is team flying. We need to allow team flying in all contests with scoring/ranking that does not discourage other pilots. Maybe even totally separate ranking in context of pairs of individuals vying for US team slots, and having the best team ranking is what gets pilot teams into a worlds. While the contest day score of an team/pair, is that of the slow pilot to make it a little more fair and encourage the team. Introducing team flying at all levels may be a new way to get more folks involved in racing. The younger generation does more things together than they do alone. Also, all teams would be on the team ranking list as well. And if the team ranking list is what drives going to a worlds, we will have very different behaviors so we have a chance to do well there.

I've been missing the annual safety report of the contests that Cochrane used to do when he was on the committee. It was highly educational and worthwhile. Isn't that a yearly required document for the Contest Committee? Who's dropped the ball? Also, yearly full explanation for percentage of fees and where the funds go. Fees are too high for what's being provided. (Not talking about tow fees) I doubt anyone is making a large profit off of contests so the question is more about the fees being paid to ssa is for what? Would like full disclosure here. SSA is not for profit organization, so where is my money going?

Identifying and promoting concepts that lead to GROWTH in SOARING is the number 1 thing that the Rules Committee should be considering - everything else is secondary. After all, if we no longer have any soaring pilots, we won't need a Rules Committee or the SSA.

Include Regionals in US Team qualifying when enough high ranked pilots attend. Base US Team points on number of ranked pilots and number of contest days for any contest, Regional or National level. Encourage a North American Pan Am contest on the West Coast.

Keep simplifying the rules and pushing for more racing tasks.

Keep up the good work!

Make use of the handicap formula mandatory for FAI Class contests.

Mandate/enforce contest reporting ON SSA WEBSITE

Many, many thanks to the Committee for your time and efforts. 99% of the time, for 99% of the pilots, the rules are just fine. It's 1% of the time and 1% of the pilots that cause an inordinate fuss. Don't let it get you down.

Most concerning matter in US racing scene is the recent adoption of non-objective methods for US team selection. Politicizing team selection is a bad idea. No committee will be better at predicting winners than actual contest results from actual racing. Voting rather than racing is not the route to improving US team performance. To the contrary, we need to have new and young talent unimpeded by old-boys-network, real or perceived. Let us instead, encourage all to compete regularly and perform continuously if they should desire to represent the US. A voting system serves the opposite result: top contenders may expect or hope to make the US team without necessarily needing to do the trailer drive to opposite coast nationals and in consequence not improve and refine their skills at the annual venues that are offered.

My biggest issue this year was the safety finish being too small good sized storms. The finish line worked really well at Uvlade and generated a good number spectators each evening. We lost something going to a high finish cylinder.
Need to focus energies on getting more contest sites and organizers to run them. Re-establishment of competitive regional contests would go a long way in getting more folks competing.

Nope.

Please do not shorten national contests duration. You will end up with participation from the most immediate areas and a few regulars.

Please don't be swayed by the couple of pilots howling for AT tasks. Those lead to landouts which are so dangerous. Thank You!

Please keep in mind that often times the voices crying for changes to tasking rules have been impacted by a poorly-called task or contest, and the problems are not the result of the rules themselves. Good tasking is a skill that can’t be guaranteed by rules alone.

Thanks for all of the work that the RC does!

Remove contest fees from the Contest Rules and present fee guidelines as a separate advisory, not mandatory, document. Input from west coast contest sites suggest that fees have been set too low and discourage organizers from bidding, even though waivers are possible. As long as the fees are announced well in advance (at the time of sanctioning), the marketplace can set the fees. I sent UH an email on Sept 1 regarding the finish gate at Uvalde. I won’t repeat it here, but please address the finish gate height and post-finish landing pattern requirement in your discussions. You folks are doing a great job. Thanks for all your work! KM

Remove the entry fees from the rules (5.4.2.1.1, & 5.4.2.1.3, & 5.4.2.1.4, & 5.4.2.4). Have 5.4.2.4 reworded to say that the organizer may charge a late fee and may reject late entries at their discretion (it is not clear now that they can).

Seriously. Stop tweaking the rules. Just because there is a Rules Committee doesn’t mean that we need to be making changes. At minimum, limit changes to every third year unless there is a MAJOR unintentional safety issue created by a prior year change.

Talk candidly with the US Junior Team and get their perspective of what might benefit sailplane racing and US Team development in the USA. Seriously consider adopting FAI rules even if you don’t like them; lobby FAI to make changes that RC feels are necessary for safety.

Thank you for your hard work and countless hours keeping our tribe moving in the right direction.

Thanks for all your work!!!!!

Thanks to all of you for serving on the Rules Committee!

The Rules shouldn’t be so complex. There are very few pilots who understand the scoring formulas, for example. And I shouldn’t have to install WinScore and rescore each day’s logs to have a sense of whether my score is wrong. Unfortunately, I don’t know how to address that problem. But I feel like if rules simplification were REALLY IMPORTANT, we could make progress.

There is a real safety issue with regard to Schweizer hooks on towplanes. At Uvalde at least two uncommanded releases from a Schweizer hook on a towplane occurred. One led to the total loss of a glider in a crash, fortunately with no injury to the pilot. The other uncommanded release occurred at a low enough altitude that the pilot could land straight ahead. There may have been a third early release as well but not personally verified by me. I suspect these events likely occurred as a result of the Schweizer hook not being fully closed by the person attaching the tow rope to the towplane. Non-pilot assistants were connecting the ropes. These assistants need better training and supervision when connecting Schweizer equipped towplanes. Schweizer hooks require extra care to verify that they are fully closed and latched.

Too many classes and teams. You are diluting the game too much.....

Tow pilot competence continues to be scary for heavy (ballasted) gliders...
Use SeeYou and Soaringspot for scoring and use kilometers as the unit of measure.

You turned the MAT into a distance event, it's a speed event. Now, those who stay out on task and fly a large distance then land out get same points as earlier finishers. This is utter madness. MAT is a speed task and those that land out should only get reduced distance points. Hello, they didn't complete the task. Now you have brought back the old P>O>S>T> with land outs winning! Start line with max start altitude and max start ground speed. Simple. Just like we did many years ago. The contest should start after start not before. Cylinder encourages looking for the better climb out top/ best area to start. It has a front start curved line radius of 13.5+ miles for serious sake! The start cylinder is dysfunctional, delusional, wrong and dangerous. Also, stop the head on convergence that the start cylinder allows. You preach safety, fair and equal for all, yet a head-on mid-air is at the highest danger during the cylinder start as current early starters can turn around and come back into the cylinder and face new starters who just started. Stop the madness of thermaling right on the cylinder boundary! Follow FAI on AT’s for TP radius as smaller is best as it clears the TP area faster. Smaller TP also allows you to see where folks will be entering and turning. The AT is not a TAT. Remember when we had camera’s and took TP photos? Keep our rules, make a small adjustment. Now they are fixed, no changes for 5 years. By showing leadership this is done, over with, simple, no more polls. Let's go race. socialize and rebuild our sport.

again allow turbo/self launch gliders to use the same handicap as the pure glider version of the same aircraft in FAI ballast allowed contest. If there is a wish to apply a punitive handicap based on the perception that there is an advantage to having a motor then you must provide a a verifiable basis for such a handicap and not just a feeling on someones part that there is a 2% advantage or some such. Thanks for the work you guys are doing. I know its a thankless job sometime.

eliminate AHRS restrictions. They reduce safety.

Responses for each text type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value responses</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short responses</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium responses</td>
<td>1068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long responses</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Return to the [2017 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll survey form](http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/surveyresults.php?FmemberID=541699&FmemberLastName=nixon&action=LISTTEXT&supress=yes&FsurveyID=RulesPoll17) to check your input.

Return to main [survey page](http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/survey.html).

If you have problems or questions contact the [survey administrator](http://www.adamsfive.com/a5soaring/survey/survey.html).