October 28, 2019 8:20 AM

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><strong>1.0 Demographics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of detailed data representing All respondants.</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1 What National contests did you fly in this season?</strong></td>
<td>Standard/Sports 13 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15M 23 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Club 15 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-26 6 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18M 28 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20M 8 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2 Do you plan on participating in the 2020 20M Class Multi Seat Nationals planned to be held in Montague, CA?</strong></td>
<td>Yes 9 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 142 (87%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3 How many Regional contests did you fly in this season?</strong></td>
<td>1 64 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 27 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 14 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 8 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+ 2 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 What Class of glider do you fly? Check all that apply:</strong></td>
<td>Open 22 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18M 71 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15M 65 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 33 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20M-Multiseat 25 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Club 48 (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-26 9 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.5 Does your glider have a sustainer motor?</strong></td>
<td>Yes 37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soaring Surveys 2019 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll Results
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Does your glider have a self launching motor?</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Do you own, co-own, rent or borrow the glider you race in? Check all that apply:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-own</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Have you ever held any of the following positions during an SSA sanctioned National Championship? Check all that apply:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scorer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Have you ever held any of the following positions during an SSA sanctioned Regional competition? Check all that apply:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scorer</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 Would you consider filling one of these positions if training was provided by the SSA and a mentor was assigned to answer your questions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11 Would your club hold an SSA sanctioned contest if assistance was provided by the SSA? Assistance would be in the form of helping find a CD, Scorer and mentor for the local Contest Manager.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 What type of training would be better for you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar based</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet based</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written manual or document</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom instruction</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 FLARM</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Does the glider you typically fly in contests have a FLARM unit?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>142</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2019, the rules were changed to require the use of Flarm compatible anti-collision devices at National Contests. There was no discussion regarding proving that the Flarm is operational at the beginning of the contest. Additionally, there was not a prescribed recourse if a pilot arrives at a contest with an operating Flarm and it subsequently fails during the contest. There has also been discussion that this rule should be relaxed for Club Class and Sports Class Nationals.

### 2.2 How should a pilot demonstrate that their Flarm is working prior to and during a contest where Flarm is required?
- Submit a flight log like we require for engine runs.
- Take the pilot's word that the Flarm is operational.
- Require a flight log only if Contest Management requests it. This can be done anytime during the contest.

### 2.3 If a pilot's Flarm suffers a failure during a contest requiring Flarm, what action should be taken?
- Remove the pilot from the competition.
- Advise all competitors which aircraft will not have an operating Flarm and allow them to continue. The pilot should make every attempt to repair the Flarm if possible.

### 2.4 Do you favor making Flarm use optional at Club Class and Sports Class Nationals?
- Yes 82
- No 77

### 2.5 Flarm use during regional contests should:
- Be required.
- Not be required.
- Required at the direction of contest management based on site and number of contest participants.
- No opinion.

### 2.6 Have you tried to rent a Flarm unit at a US contest?
- Yes 44
- No 119

### 2.7 Comment on the Flarm rental program:

### 2.8 Flarm Stealth mode disables much of the information such as climb rate and contest ID that enables tactical use of Flarm. The use of Flarm Stealth mode during contests should be:
- Made mandatory.
- Controlled by contest organizers based on site and number of participants.
- Pilot option to use stealth mode or not.
- Be forbidden.
- No opinion.

### 2.9 Comment on allowing the use of Flarm Stealth mode:

### 2.10 Comment on requiring the use of Flarm:
- Yes 61
- No 37

### 3.0 Tracking

### 3.1 What type of tracking equipment is used in your glider? Check all that apply:
| 3.1a | List tracking equipment if selected Other above. | 16 |
| 3.2 | Should some form of tracking technology be required at sites where there may be limited cell phone connectivity (ie. Uvalde, Nephi, etc.)? This would give contest organizers and search and rescue personnel better capability to locate missing pilots. | |
| | Required | 80 |
| | ContestOrganizers | 81 |
| | NotRequired | 26 |
| | NoOpinion | 4 |
| 4.0 | New Technology/Communications | All |
| 4.1 | Have you had the opportunity to use cell phone weather applications in the cockpit? | |
| | Yes | 47 |
| | No | 118 |
| 4.2 | Does your glider have an artificial horizon, turn and bank or other software feature enabled that provides attitude information when not in competition? | |
| | Yes | 30 |
| | No | 135 |
| 4.2a | Specify the type of artificial horizon if answered yes to the above. | 34 |
| 4.3 | What type of transponder is your glider equipped with? | |
| | ModeC | 25 |
| | ModeS | 74 |
| | None | 64 |
| 4.4 | Is your glider equipped with ADS-B Out? | |
| | Yes | 43 |
| | No | 119 |
| 4.5 | Do you intend to equip your glider with ADS-B Out within the next 2 years? | |
| | Yes | 54 |
| | No | 86 |
| 4.6 | Please comment on any available technology that you would like to be newly allowed in aircraft as per the contest rules. | 24 |
| 5.0 | Soaring Goals | All |
| | On a scale of 1 to 5 with: | |
| | 1 being "strongly agree" | |
| | 2 being "somewhat agree" | |
| | 3 being "neutral" | |
| | All | |
Please answer the following questions about your soaring goals:

| 5.1 | Achieving a podium finish in a WGC event is a personal goal I am committed to achieving. | 1 \(27\) 17%  
2 \(19\) 12%  
3 \(30\) 18%  
4 \(18\) 11%  
5 \(70\) 43% |
| 5.2 | Being selected to a US Soaring Team is a personal goal I am committed to and working towards. | 1 \(33\) 20%  
2 \(22\) 13%  
3 \(26\) 16%  
4 \(11\) 7%  
5 \(70\) 43% |
| 5.3 | Winning a US National Contest is a personal goal I am committed to and working towards. | 1 \(61\) 37%  
2 \(30\) 18%  
3 \(31\) 19%  
4 \(7\) 4%  
5 \(36\) 22% |
| 5.4 | US Teams consistently achieving podium finishes at WGC events should be a priority of the US Soaring community. | 1 \(49\) 30%  
2 \(44\) 27%  
3 \(43\) 26%  
4 \(5\) 3%  
5 \(22\) 13% |

6.0 Trial Use of FAI Rules

For the purposes of this survey, "FAI Rules" specifically means only FAI task definitions and FAI scoring formulae. In the 2017 and 2018 Pilot Polls, a plurality of pilots favored adoption of FAI rules with the use of local procedures to implement features that are of high importance for US racing conditions and pilot preferences. The RC has stated its intention to pursue this course of action on a trial basis in FAI Class National contests in 2020.

6.1 Have you flown in a contest in the past three years that used FAI-based rules? Yes \(48\) 29%  
No \(114\) 70% |

6.2 How familiar are you with the main differences between US and FAI Rules?
### 6.3 Do you support implementing FAI-based competition rules on a trial basis at Nationals for FAI Classes in 2020?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td>116</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.4 How do you believe a move to FAI-based rules would likely affect your enjoyment of racing in the US?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Significantly Increase</th>
<th>Somewhat Increase</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Somewhat Decrease</th>
<th>Significantly Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.5 How do you believe a move to FAI-based rules would likely affect the safety of racing in the US?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Significantly Increase</th>
<th>Somewhat Increase</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Somewhat Decrease</th>
<th>Significantly Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.6 How do you believe a move to FAI-based rules would likely affect your likelihood of participating in US soaring competitions?

- Significantly increase my likelihood to participate.
- Somewhat increase my likelihood to participate.
- No change in my likelihood to participate.
- Decrease my likelihood to participate.
- Significantly decrease my likelihood to participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Significantly Increase</th>
<th>Somewhat Increase</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Somewhat Decrease</th>
<th>Significantly Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.0 Potential adjustments to FAI rules via "Local Procedures" to accommodate the US soaring environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjustment</th>
<th>Keep</th>
<th>Eliminate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.1 Modified Assigned Task, "MAT" , for Regional competitions.

- Keep 120
- Eliminate 38

### 7.2 MAT task type for National competitions.

- Keep 69
- Eliminate 83

### 7.3 Preferred Units used for tasking and scoring:

- English (95, 58%)
- Metric (22, 58%)
- Combination (distance=km, altitude-ft and speed-kph)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.4 Do you prefer a Start line or Start Cylinder? (Note: FAI Rules allow both Start Line and Start Cylinder)</th>
<th>Line 29 18%</th>
<th>Cylinder 65 40%</th>
<th>LikeBothAsOptions 67 41%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.5 Max Start Altitude Limits. FAI rules either have no altitude limit on the start or require at least one fix below a set altitude after the start gate opens. US rules have an altitude limit, but allow start out of the top. What do you prefer?</th>
<th>NoLimit 42 26%</th>
<th>FixBelowLimit 37 23%</th>
<th>US2019Rules 76 47%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 7.6 Do you favor an airspeed limit prior to Start? | FavorAirspeedLimit 91 56% | FavorNoAirspeedLimit 70 43% |
| --- | --- |

| 7.7 Tactical pilot to pilot communications at Nationals. | Favor 64 39% | Oppose 96 59% |
| --- | --- |

| 7.8 Tactical pilot to pilot communications at Regionals. | Favor 76 47% | Oppose 88 54% |
| --- | --- |

| 7.9 Tactical pilot communication with support crews on the ground during any contest? | Favor 53 33% | Oppose 109 67% |
| --- | --- |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.10 Assigned (Racing) Task turn cylinder radius. Note: the 500m option may require the units for distance to be km in your navigation system or use of an approximation in miles (such as 0.3 sm - which is 53 feet smaller than 500m).</th>
<th>500m 47 29%</th>
<th>0.5mi 23 14%</th>
<th>1.0mi 83 51%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 7.11 One of the difficulties with Assigned (Racing) Tasks is tasking into areas with the potential of adverse weather. Some countries have compensated for this problem by designating turn sectors for an assigned task. There is no credit given for distance achieved within the sector. This allows an assigned task to be flown avoiding adverse weather. Should AT's be allowed to use sectors? | Yes 103 63% | No 52 32% |
| --- | --- |

| 7.12 FAI rules do not give credit for distance made inside the turn cylinder of assigned tasks whereas US rules do give credit for distance made in the cylinder. Should credit be given for distance made inside the cylinder of an Assigned Task? | GiveCredit 79 48% | NoCredit 78 48% |
| --- | --- |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.13 In 2019 the penalty for low finishes was modified to approximate the penalty under FAI rules at 1 point per 3 feet. Do you believe the rule as now written is:</th>
<th>TooHarsh 30 18%</th>
<th>AboutRight 114</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• About right.
• Too lenient on low finishers.

7.14 France recently modified their finish penalty from the current FAI penalty to a time penalty for finish below finish cylinder limit at 10 sec/ft. Is this something you would favor?

Favor 10
Oppose 43
NotSure 108

7.14a Comment on finish penalties.

7.15 Please provide any general comments on the subject of the FAI Rules trials for 2020.

7.16 Please provide any general comments on the subject of moving to FAI rules for 2021.

8.0 The Airfield Landing Bonus Rule.

8.1 The Airfield Landing Bonus was added to the rules in response to concerns regarding an increase in damage from outlandings. This higher number of claims in the glider segment of aviation insurance was a concern to the industry. Pat Costello, a major glider insurer, briefed the SSA that this year, claims for 2019 have doubled. In the power aviation segment, insurance premiums have risen upwards of 15-18%. The benefit of starting an engine over an airfield has the same benefit of a pure glider altering course to be able to land at an airfield.

The rule, (10.10.3.4.1), for a motorized glider to claim an airfield bonus was modified in 2019. The minimum motor start altitude was lowered from 1000' AGL and 2 sm from the airport center to 800' AGL and 1 sm. The RC has received feedback that, under some circumstances, this forces motor gliders seeking the airport bonus to enter the airport traffic pattern to perform an engine start, potentially creating traffic conflicts and confusion. Also, many motor glider pilots feel that the rule is too restrictive and that the motor glider pilot should have the same right to a low save as a motorless glider pilot.

Regarding the Airfield Landing Bonus for motor gliders, do we:

• No change - retain 1 sm and 800'
• Return to the 2018 rule of 2 sm and 1000'
• Keep altitude at 800', but change distance requirement to 2 sm
• Treat motor gliders just like a non motor glider. You must land to get an Airfield Landing Bonus.
• Eliminate Airfield Landing Bonus for all gliders. (This is the FAI rules treatment.)

8.2 Comment on Airfield Landing Bonus for motor gliders.

9.0 Penalties

9.1 For some penalties, the number of points assessed for an infraction are left to the discretion of the CD. This year, we had a rule breach (inoperative mandatory safety equipment) that did not have a specific penalty. The CD felt that the penalty should have a specific action by the CD to redress the violation. Here is the current rule that assists the CD in handling this situation:

1.8 Rules Interpretation

• 1.8.1 Any SSA member may at any time request an interpretation of a Rule. Such requests shall be submitted to the SSA Rules Committee Chairman.
• 1.8.2 The Rules Committee Chairman, in consultation with members of the SSA Rules Committee, shall make a prompt interpretation and shall communicate this in writing.

Do you favor providing more specific guidance in the rules regarding the amount and type of penalties for most rule infractions?

• Support the current approach that the CD should have the latitude to assign penalty points, as they see fit, to redress a rules violation.
• Have penalties pre-assigned specific values for most rule violations with no CD latitude.

9.2 Comment on penalties.
### 10.0 Contest ID

The rule on Contest ID's require the ID to be in a block font. There has been discussion that various fonts and artistic renderings used in aircraft Contest ID's are difficult to read. Do you favor:

- Do away with the block letter requirement.
- If contestants feel a pilot's Contest ID is hard to read, ask CD to have pilot modify the ID to be more legible.
- Leave rule as it is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RemoveBlockRequirement</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAction</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LeaveAsIs</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FAI rules do not require a contest ID be displayed on the lower side of the wing. As we transition over to FAI rules, do you favor:

- Keep the US rules requirement making the contest ID on lower surface of wing mandatory.
- Delete the requirement to have the contest ID on the lower surface of the wing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KeepRule</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeleteRequirement</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11.0 Ways to increase contest participation.

Recent Standard Class National Championships have experienced declining participation. Several nations such as Poland and Australia have addressed this problem by combining the 15m and Standard Classes into one contest and applying unique handicaps to the contest. National team selection could be accomplished through selection of the winner of the subclass. Would you favor combining the Standard and 15M Class Nationals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KeepRule</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeleteRequirement</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on combining the Standard and 15M Class Nationals? (or other contests)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has been suggested that splitting the National contests to an East/West contest format would increase participation by decreasing the drive time to the contest. Do you favor moving to an East and West Coast Nationals? (For example, there would be both an East Coast and a West Coast 18M Nationals in the same year).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another suggestion to increase participation in National Competitions is to limit nationals to outstanding soaring sites. Do you favor having only a few outstanding soaring sites named as "Nationals Capable" and limiting National competitions to those sites?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on increasing contest participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12.0 Club Class Contest

Unlike other National contests where the length is 9 or 10 days, the Club Class Nationals length is set to "at least 7 and not more than 10 days." Should the Club Class Nationals length be increased to align it with the length of the other FAI national contests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support lengthening the contest</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave the Club Class Contest length unchanged</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 13.0 Motor Glider Engine Test

In 2019, the rules for motor glider prestart engine testing were changed. Now the rules allow a motor glider engine test to be performed as follows: "Once per flight, pilots may elect to test an engine that was not used for self-launch. The engine must be started within three miles of the home airfield, within 30 minutes of aerotow release and not below 1000 ft AGL. The flight log must show an engine run no longer than two minutes, during which the climb did not exceed 800 ft. After engine shut-down, the flight log must show that within 10 minutes the pilot returned to the altitude and approximate location of the engine start."

There have been recommendations that this rule be modified to eliminate the three mile restriction and allow the test to be conducted at any prestart location or at least in an area within three miles of a location determined by the CD. For example, this would allow test engine starts to avoid being performed when adverse weather exists within three miles of the airfield or when the starting point is some distance away from the airfield. What do you favor?

- Eliminate the three mile limit from airfield. This would allow an engine test to be performed at any location. It would still require an engine run less than two minutes,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate3miLimit</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TestInStartCylinder</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDDetermines</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LeaveAsIs</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
no greater gain than 800 ft and return to test start altitude and approximate location within 10 minutes of engine start.

- Require the engine test be performed within the start cylinder. This option would still require an engine run less than two minutes, no greater gain than 800 ft and return to test start altitude and approximate location within 10 minutes of engine start.
- Eliminate requirement that the engine test be done at a point defined by the home airfield. Let the CD determine where an engine test is to be completed. It would still require an engine run less than two minutes, no greater gain than 800 ft and return to test start altitude and approximate location within 10 minutes of engine start.
- Keep rule as is.

13.2 The current penalty for straying outside of the 3mi limit during an engine test results in ending the pilot's competition for the day. This is a severe penalty for encouraging what should be a safety test. If the 3 mile limit is retained from the question above, do you favor reducing this penalty?

|  | Yes 117 | 72% |
|  | No 29 | 18% |

14.0 Contest Registration/Organization

14.1 It would be possible to pay for Contest registration electronically via PayPal with the addition of a small fee. Would you be willing to add the Paypal fee to the cost of registration to be able to pay electronically?

|  | Yes 121 | 74% |
|  | No 39 | 24% |

14.2 In 2018 we encouraged Contest Managers to provide contestants their Pilot Kit via electronic means, cutting down on contest printing expenses. We asked that paper copies be provided to those pilots who wanted one. However, there are some items that pilots have said that they would like to have always printed. Please comment on what you would like to see still printed out in the contest packet for all pilots.

|  | 76 | 47% |

14.3 Comments on Contest Registration/Organization.

|  | 32 | 20% |

15.0 General Comments

15.1 Comment on issues you would like the rules committee to consider at the 2019 meeting?

|  | 56 | 34% |

Return to the 2019 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll survey form to check your input.

Return to main survey page.

If you have problems or questions contact the survey administrator.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comment on the Flarm rental program:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few cases of bad behavior by renters have been a big burden. It's not easy to get good antenna performance from a quickie install.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good idea. Flarm at a contest primarily using Thermals is on as important as a contest with ridge tasking. As someone who has used this program on multiple occasions, it is a tremendous asset to the soaring community. I would support adding a fee to contest expenses to support administration of this program. Everyone benefits from more widespread FLARM use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core units should be available? Easier swap if/when someone's unit is faulty... possibly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EASY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flarm is as much distraction as benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flarm units should be available for rent. Perfect way to address those situations where a pilot can not afford a unit or is trying a contest for the first time and does not want to invest in the early stage of his contest career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God Bless Williams Soaring for keeping it going. Particularly for Club Class &amp; Junior competitors it has made national level competition possible for more people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great option for Sports/Club Class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great! Thanks Rex and Noelle!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I decided to buy one after renting one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found the portable Powerflarm to be very disappointing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look forward to renting a flarm for th glider I plan to fly at Club Class Nationals next year and at 2021 20M Nationals. I think its a bit silly that Nationals require the use of Flarm when some of the Regionals are more heavily attended then some of the nationals. Maybe the criteria for Flarm should be based on the size of the contest not whether its a Nats or Regionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I normally do not fly with a FLARM since only 1 other pilot in our area flies with FLARM. I flew the 2019 Club Class National, where the IGC file submission was more restrictive; I needed a &quot;valid&quot; IGC file rather than one I normally submit at regional competitions coming from my FlyWithCE logger. Williams was very timely in sending me a rentable portable FLARM. Qudos, and a highly recommended service. The issue I had with this arrangement was that (since I am not familiar with FLARM configuration), I had no idea that I needed to set up a FLARM config file, Fortunately, I had help getting a config file created and uploaded. It would have been extremely helpful if some &quot;how to&quot; information was provided to renters, and I had to time to test it to make certain the logger was recording properly (for me it was NOT) and a big fat ZERO ensued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rented a Flarm when the rental program first started and it was great.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've always owned a flarm, I sold my portable to Williams Soaring for rental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've rented a Flarm twice, and while it formally &quot;worked&quot; I considered it a waste of time, a distraction in the cockpit, and no help or improvement in safety. In part these problems come from the fact that the rental flarms give you none of the advantages that a well-installed and configured flarm can give you ... and all of the distractions and the miseries. Our cockpits are already too full of beeping widgets, and I am concerned as a CFI that these flarms are turning ever more of our contest pilots into pseudo-IFR pilots, it's all on the panel, and what's going on out there be damned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've rented a Flarm twice before acquiring my own PowerFLARM and it worked flawlessly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If mandatory FLARM, then rental should be available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended to rent from Rex &amp; Noelle but found a loaner from a friend--that I subsequently purchased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was awesome. Williams sent me a rental unit for 2 different contests before i bit the bullet and bought one for myself. It was a fair price and made Flarm usage affordable for all classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It worked the one time I rented. That experience was good enough to convince me to purchase the Brick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It worked well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's been years since I did, but William's Soaring made it easy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like the program, but not sure it is available any more. Could be a resolution to provide a rental flarm to contests for possible failed flarms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs to continue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No comment other than if there are enough units available then it should be required until all are rented.

None

Not applicable -- have a FLARM core

Not sure of its status

Rented a FLARM the first year they were available. It worked well and helped make the decision to invest in FLARM

Rex and Noelle Mayes have provided a wonderful Flarm Rental service which barely breaks even. The original plan was to provide a bridge until Flarm had matured as a technology which was 5+ years ago since it's introduction. Flarm has matured with many options available from different providers. I believe, Rex and Noelle are planning to exit the Flarm Rental service.

The Flarm rental program is great. I have used it for several years. My home club has very few XC pilots so I thought there was no need to install a flarm permanently in both of my gliders unless I was in a contest. After using it I have now installed one in my new glider together with ads b in and out. The rental program is a great stepping stone for those not convinced of it's value.

The rental portable flarm units have many problems and rarely fit in most gliders.

The rental unit would not fit easily in my LS8 a few years ago.

The unit did operate successfully.

This program needs to be robust if FLARM is to be required.

Very glad it has been in place. Obviously, Nephi was an early adopter of mandatory FLARM and without this rental program, many dozens of pilots would not have participated in our events over the last 6 years.

Was OK because Williams did/does a very good job. However, the rule was whoever had "not" used a FLARM before got priority over a pilot who had rented one before if the number of rental units was not enough to serve all that desired a rental FLARM.

When Flarm first came out I rented one from Williams I think It was easy and cheap

Worked for me.

Worked great--it was a very long time ago.

Worked well.

Worked well. Easy to get easy to return

Worked well. I bought the one I rented.

if you make a contest with mandatory flarm/ you must supply rental units

2.9

::

Comment on allowing the use of Flarm Stealth mode:

Causes more head down time in the cockpit.

Don't fool with the stealth mode Requires creating a new config file is a pain in the ass

Flarm is a minor component in winning contests. It is a pain to switch back and forth between modes - but if a pilot is paranoid they should have the option of having it set for pure collision avoidance. ps - no one follows me :)

Flarm promotes leaching that interferes with measurement of pilot skill, the point of a contest

Flarm usage with full capability continues to detract from the contest experience. It allows those with lesser ability place higher than they would otherwise be able to. It removes the reward for taking a sporting risk thus leading to a less fulfilling experience. Using stealth mode at all contests would be one way of having the safety benefits of FLARM without lessening the contest experience. Unfortunately, there has to be a way to counter those who would cheat and find a way around the stealth feature.

For better situational awareness I'd prefer Stealth mode was not used.

H

Haven't tried stealth mode yet. Possibly a trial run at Nationals is in order. Regionals should stay at full info being displayed to allow the fun factor to be maintained.

I believe the manufacturer states that it reduces alerts and recommends against it. If that is correct, ie that stealth mode reduces safety, it would be unwise from a potential liability point of view for SSA or the contest organizers to permit the stealth mode.

I could see legal implications were flarm stealth to be used and an accident that could be blamed on that.

I don't have enough direct experience with the current implementation of Stealth Mode to comment. If collision detection range is unaffected, then it could be useful. We should look to Europe for guidance on this option.

I don't like the idea of electronic leaching but I think that once installed and working properly, the device should be allowed to send the full packet of information. There could be a situation where the climb rate and/or ID of another competitor helps provide a pilot with safety information -- such as finding a thermal to avoid a dangerous landout. You could argue that the pilot should never get into a situation where finding such a thermal is needed, but we all know what sometimes happens.

I don't see that stealth mode can be made to work if the pilot is willing to work at it. Given that I don't see an alternative except just let it be used. If made stealth mode mandatory and made it unsportsmanlike conduct for trying to defeat it, them maybe.

I flew the 2015 Std. Nats in Elmira where stealth was mandated. It worked fine to improve safety. The tactical advantage of FLARM that was dismissed by those who argued against mandatory stealth mode (which I supported) is now an indisputable fact.
As I understand it, mandatory stealth mode is a non-starter from a legal liability perspective so I'm not sure why this answer is even among the choices.

I have mixed feelings - IDs are good for team flying and WGC practice.

I prefer a level playing field. That means Stealth mode either mandatory or forbidden. I also like flying to be a direct experience with the weather and experience, not one based on gizmos and looking into the cockpit a lot. Hence mandatory stealth mode.

I strongly dislike use of flarm for tactical leeching but stealth mode results in targets not shown until too close. Safety is enhance by seeing targets further away than Stealth shows. A "Competition Mode" should be available which maintains full distance detection/display but removes contest ID and climb rate. This would be a good compromise.

I turned Stealth mode on during a practice day to fully understand how it would work tactically. As expected, other pilots could not see my climb rates/ID, however the it also affected my own usage. I could no longer see other gliders ID/climb rates and couldn't see traffic at all until very close (<1 mile). So, the tactical advantage gained by turning it on, also gave me a tactical disadvantage since I could no longer see anyone else. I think if you left it pilot option, you'd find very few using stealth once they realize the impacts.

I would like to see pilots making their own decisions on a task and not use flarm position of other competitors to leach.

I would like to see pilots making their own decisions on a task and not use flarm position of other competitors to leach.

I would prefer stealth mode not be used, especially at the regional level. I do understand why contestants want it. I am not one that wants to use it.

I'm personally too busy flying to make much use of Flarm in a tactical sense. However, I understand how others object to this information being available.

If allowed at pilot's option then those who worry they'll be "leached" on can use that mode. Those who want to cooperate with a team/partner can use FLARM to "see" each other better, some may think that's cheating but it's not conceptually different from using eyeballs, just easier. In regional contests communications is allowed anyway, and I think the allowed forms of communications should be widened. (The communications ban is not enforceable anyway.)

If/where Flarm is required please prohibit stealth mode.

Is not needed, leave it up to pilots

It does not reduce safety in a meaningful way. It should be a safety device and not a leach tool.

It was used in 2015 at Elmira to no ill effects. How it would work at a western location with higher closing speeds, I don't know.

Knowing who I will be flying close to is an important addition to evaluating safety.

Let the pilot determine his level of risk

Many collision situations developed for me, even in Flarm mandatory nationals. A few situations occurred where I was completely unaware of a glider that came within 150 meters and there was no indication at all. Several different gliders on several days. Likely stealth mode problems. And no collision warning whatsoever in one occurrence when less than 100 meters away. Essentially zero situational awareness for either pilot when we were both required to carry a 2k anti collision instrument. I found this unacceptable, and unnerving, as I later learned one pilot had chose to turn the Flarm off and was NOT PENALIZED. Without enforcement such rules are poor at best. If Flarm is mandatory then the igc file from the Flarm SHOULD BE the primary file required with a warning for failure and DSQ for second offense. This limits the guys who turn off the Flarms at key moments, etc. See if Flarm can limit the range to 3 miles or something to satisfy the anti tech folks. Safety is currently compromised in the US without solid enforcement with teeth.

Minimize eyes in cockpit looking at electronic screens.

Needs to be all or none.

No experience with it one way or another so no opinion

No problem with it as soon as position, altitude and heading is provided.

Non-stealth-mode information is of minimal value in terms of overall racing strategy. The odds that using this information to one's advantage (once or perhaps twice over an entire contest week) actually will make a notable difference at the top of the scoresheet is minuscule. There are random factors in soaring - such as the location and timing of a thermal on an Assigned Task - which can play a much bigger role. For years people have been flying without stealth mode at contests I've been to and I've never heard of someone making a big move on the scoresheet as a result. Can we please put this issue to bed?

Pilot option

Pilot option so long as in stealth mode, the pilot opting out is not to see any information on pilots who choose to participate.

Progress sometimes creates problems! Can't believe the potential liability doesn't stop us from considering how to reduce the workings of the device.

Seeing another glider's climb rate remotely is obviously a helpful signal to a soaring pilot. Is this good or bad for competition? I do not know the answer to this question. There are good reasons for each choice. I think a big discussion should be hosted on-line with people giving their reasons for each view. Then a vote should be taken among comp pilots.

Should be up to the pilot

Something is always better than nothing when it comes to collision avoidance so it's difficult to be negative about FLARM. However, the perceived purpose of FLARM has long been superseded by it's use as a tactical device. At the World Gliding Championships in Australia there two mid-air collisions. FLARM was mandatory. At least one well known international pilot had six electronic displays in his cockpit, primarily for the purpose of following the best pilots. FLARM ID's were being changed in-flight. At least at the world level, FLARM is primarily a tactical device. I know that certain countries have proposed rules to the FAI that would reduce or eliminate the value of FLARM as a tactical device. If you are going to make it mandatory you need to adopt these practices.
Stealth degrades Flarm
Stealth mode also significantly decreases range of warnings. Reduced warning range reduces EVERYBODY's safety.
Stealth mode would negate much of the benefits of the Flarm. If Stealth mode is permitted, why require Flarm at all? To use Flarm to track a competitor would require devoting a lot of attention to tracking and following. If you are doing that, you are not paying attention to thermalling and flying the course, and hence more likely to land out.

Stealth should be all or none
Sure, let them use stealth.
Tactical use of Flarm adds an additional level of strategic complexity that I like.
The Flarm manufacturer recommends against it because it reduces efficacy of the device as a collision avoidance mechanism. That is reason enough to forbid it.
The SSA previously took a position after obtaining legal advice that it would have no official position re use or prohibition of stealth mode.
The primary use of Flarm is situational awareness, this use is more important and contributes more to safety than the alarms themselves. Stealth mode minimizes or eliminates its usefulness as a situational awareness tool.
The rules for Flarm should mirror the IGC policies to best prepare pilots to fly in the Worlds. Right now this information is Pilot Option.
There should not be any rule pertaining to Flarm. Completely optional. Flarm is fraught with ongoing problems. ADSB use will eliminate flarm.
This is how the IGC will mandate its use in the future.
Tricky...
Unless Flarm Stealth mode provides EXACTLY the same anti-collision features, it should not be an option to use it until it does. Regardless of what the FAI is doing!
Use of Stealth mode must NEVER be restricted or forbidden.
Use of Stealth should be different between World, National and Regional competitions. In Regional comps it should not be allowed.
Very common to hear the winner say, "I saw them on FLARM" when making some tactical decision. FLARM is a competitive game changer. On the other hand its is fun to see who is where doing what on course. Most competitors are not trying to win but having a good time and FLARM in NON-STEALTH supports this.
Without Stealth Mode Flarm makes racing a video game. With Stealth Mode, we gain back at least some of the individual spirit of the sport. Make Flarm about safety, not digitally enhanced leeching.
the downside of stealth mode is that it makes it difficult to know if the system is working properly or not. In open mode, we'll see each other at considerable distance, this is reassuring.

2.10

Comment on requiring the use of Flarm:

ADSB out requirements will soon make moot this discussion, or at least the tactical objections.
Actually I think it's good and bad. FLARM I believe does create a bit safer flying environment, BUT it does promote keeping your head in the cockpit. And, I think we've found that some pilots think since they have FLARM, they don't have to keep visual vigilance like not having it. WE need to treat FLARM like while it's useful, it is not always reliable and nothing is better than visual attentiveness.
All we hear from the racing committee is their main concern is safety when it comes to the rules, but then they don't require FLARM. I think the committee is a group of hypocrites.
Any contest with more than 15 gliders ought to make Flarm mandatory. The one concern is Club Class which is our cheap entry class. Therefore the current policy makes the most sense except we ought to relax the requirement for Club Class entrants in my experience.
Do not ever require Flarm. Flarm should be eliminated. If we are serious about midair avoidance the SSA should halt their opposition to transponder use, and should make transponder and ADSB out mandatory, same as for powered craft.
FLARM is a critical safety technology.
FLARM is a good addition to pilot awareness during contests. It should be mandatory
FLARM is a tremendous safety innovation and its use should continue to be strongly encouraged. Keep it simple for people to equip and use it (i.e. don't make them worry about Stealth Mode or other settings purely for contests), and you have a higher likelihood of people equipping it and using it (both in casual XC flying and in contests). At large events and/or where there are airspace or terrain restrictions that bring lots of aircraft into close proximity, FLARM should be considered mandatory.
FLaRm makes team flying much easier but the tactical info is open
Flarm has helped me avoid conflict in a number of instances. I think it is a positive addition to collision avoidance. Silver bullet? Of course not, but on balance I am for continued use and promotion.
Flarm in contests is extremely important - and should be available if possible. As well as trackers. Pilots are not allowed to communicate with crew, so best for the sport to know where every one is and the pilots to know they will not swap paint with anyone.
Flarm is a barrier to entry for some and I don't believe it should be required to fly a contest. Flarm radar is one of the biggest threats to our sport, especially if info can come from the ground back to the cockpit.

I am in favor of mandating use at nationals and in the future moving down to regionals. Flarm should be required in all competitions.

Flarm should not be required in any SSA sanctioned contests.

Flarm usage with full capability continues to detract from the contest experience. It allows those with lesser ability place higher than they would otherwise be able to. It removes the reward for taking a sporting risk thus leading to a less fulfilling experience.

For safety sake. Though a better range would be much nicer. Some of my FLARM warnings also seem to get stuck on the Oudie, so a flawless operation would be nice.

I am not in favor of mandatory flarm. I want pilots to be observing outside the cockpit. See and avoid

I believe, it's a good thing. Contest Management should continue to be able to determine if it is or is not required for their contest. If you want to continue to have a Flarm Rental program, I believe, you need to find someone else to run the program.

I do not think Flarm should be a requirement to compete in any class.

I don't like blanket mandates. However, Flarm can enhance safety. It should be up to contest management to decide on whether the situation warrants a Flarm mandate.

I don't like how much it's changed the sport and the leeching, however it's here to stay and the safety benefits are undeniable. So, i'm in support of mandating for all contests.

I don't really have a problem with requiring the use of flarm in nationals, but at the same time I didn't find it particularly useful during the club nationals this year.

I just like to see position, altitude and heading for safety reason all the rest is not important to me

I like required Flarm use, but believe there are situations and contestants that this would be an additional burden that might prevent them from otherwise flying the contest. I think the CD should be able to provide waivers to individual contestants. As far as proving a Flarm is working at the national level I think a few random checks of contestants should be done and additional checks may be requested by the CD.

I see little advantage to this, having flown in large gaggles many times. If gliders are close enough to crash the last place you should be looking is at an instrument screen in the cockpit.

I should be required. It is relatively inexpensive and the safety value is significant.

I think it is a good thing. But Sports Class is the "low cost, entry level" contest. Perhaps require at Nationals only.

I think it is difficult to require FLARM in all contests without a robust FLARM rental program as a complement. It doesn't make sense to mandate that $12k gliders install a $2.5k FLARM unit so that they can fly contests. Regardless, I would like to see 100% FLARM adoption, in large part because analysis of FLARM logs can be used to locate missing gliders in the event of an overdue pilot or accident.

I'm getting less and less interested in flying contests the more they become a very expensive video game. The "tactical" use of flarm distresses me, but even more it's apparent that all the widgets in the cockpit mean that most of the pilots simply aren't really looking where they are going. The flarm becomes "I need a flarm to protect myself from you ... because you have a flarm, you don't look where you are going anymore."

I'm not generally in favor of mandating more cost but I make an exception here. It works. It looks like it will be around for a while. So make it mandatory. I'm still using a Portable FLARM, which works great, that I installed in my glider the first time in a few minutes.

I've found FLARM to be an essential part of situational awareness and believe strongly it should be required for SSA sanctioned events.

I'm in favor of requiring use at nationals and in the future moving down to regionals.

In its day, until ads-b, Flarm maybe had a place. at this point, ads-b out is the national airspace standard and should be where the glider community is going, not the continued use of Flarm. ads-b at this point costs about the same as Flarm. add a small additional cost for ads-b in and you do not need Flarm. i have ads-b out and in.

It has saved my bacon a few times. Glad it is here and hope it only grows and is here to stay.

It's a great safety item

It is amazing the number of pilots that don't register their contest number. This is kind of a secret stealth mode. If FLARM failure becomes a reason to get ejected from a contest this will lead to pilots owning a backup device. Going to contests is too expensive to get thrown out. Also, we don't throw folks out if they have a radio failure....

It should be mandatory at the Nationals level. Rentals shouldn't be necessary with the availability of Flarm Mice at a reasonable price. PowerFlarms being mandatory is a different subject - they are better as a pilot selected option.

It should be required for collision avoidance, not to enable tactical or leeching decisions.

It's a brave new world.

It's not perfect but it's much, much better than nothing and not a high barrier for contest pilots.

It's too expensive to require at the regional/club class level.

Makes sense to me! We require parachutes!
Nationals - yes. Regionals - up to contest director. No brainer

On balance it is a help for safety, but if I find a thermal it sure causes a bunch of big, white plastic friends. Peer pressure is probably a better approach than mandating for contests which attract pilots operating on a smaller budget. An alternative is for rental units to be made available free of charge if needed with the rental fee covered by the SSA's Surplus Sanction Fee funds. This might be offered on a trial basis at a few contests to see if it makes a difference.

Regarding the idea of removing a pilot from competition because of Flarm failures: This would be very unfair. I've had Flarm failures at two contests. In both cases I was lucky to be flying with experienced troubleshooters, who dedicated a lot of time to the problems, but in both cases we wound up flying multiple days with no Flarm before it was fixed. This is with access to a spare unit. No clear error messages are issued by Flarm. The Flarm log file is a joke: no one in the USA can look at a Flarm log file and tell you what is wrong, including the USA Flarm dealers and the even the developer who got it certified in the USA. Flarm is great when it works but very hard to debug when something goes wrong. Required at all SSA sanctioned contests but stealth mode is at pilot's discretion.

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Required in all sanctioned contests. It has proven to have avoided many collisions at Nationals

See above. Many collision situations developed for me, even in Flarm mandatory nationals. A few situations occurred where I was completely unaware of a glider that came within 150 meters and there was no indication at all. Several different gliders on several days. Likely stealth mode problems. And no collision warning whatsoever in one occurrence when less than 100 meters away. Essentially zero situational awareness for either pilot when we were both required to carry a 2k anti collision instrument. I found this unacceptable, and unnerving, as I later learned one pilot had chose to turn the Flarm off and was NOT PENALIZED. Without enforcement such rules are poor at best. If Flarm is mandatory then the igc file from the Flarm SHOULD BE the primary file required with a warning for failure and DSQ for second offense. This limits the guys who turn off the Flarms at key moments, etc. See if Flarm can limit the range to 3 miles or something to satisfy the anti tech folks. Safety is currently compromised in the US without solid enforcement with teeth.

Required in all sanctioned contests. It has proven to have avoided many collisions at Nationals

See above. Many collision situations developed for me, even in Flarm mandatory nationals. A few situations occurred where I was completely unaware of a glider that came within 150 meters and there was no indication at all. Several different gliders on several days. Likely stealth mode problems. And no collision warning whatsoever in one occurrence when less than 100 meters away. Essentially zero situational awareness for either pilot when we were both required to carry a 2k anti collision instrument. I found this unacceptable, and unnerving, as I later learned one pilot had chose to turn the Flarm off and was NOT PENALIZED. Without enforcement such rules are poor at best. If Flarm is mandatory then the igc file from the Flarm SHOULD BE the primary file required with a warning for failure and DSQ for second offense. This limits the guys who turn off the Flarms at key moments, etc. See if Flarm can limit the range to 3 miles or something to satisfy the anti tech folks. Safety is currently compromised in the US without solid enforcement with teeth.

Should be mandatory, works great- really adds to safety

Should be required until a better solution is available

Use of Flarm should NEVER be mandatory in ANY contest.

Where flarm is required, hopefully all contests, there should be an on-site rental program to backup any flarm unit which goes unopened during the contest. 2 or 3 spares on hand.

With the existence of head lights on car, would anyone consider not requiring racing cars to have their lights on at night on the interstate or a racing track? The situation with Flarm is analogous. With now very high adoption rates, and the proven safety-enhancing record of Flarm, why would anyone consider not requiring it on glider races, aparticulary on AST where all gliders remain in near proximity during the entire task and taking (likely the same) thermals?

Would be completely OK to eliminate Flarm in contest of < 20 contestants

Yes at Nationals - No at regionals and low performance contests

You have decided to make it required in Nationals. So don't make it optional. Similar to parachutes...each pilot must use it each day.

3.1a:
List tracking equipment if selected Other above.

ADSB
ADSB-Bout
ADSB-OUT can be used for live tracking as well via FlightAware. The tracking is even more live than SPOT if the aircraft is in range of a ground based antenna.

APRS
FLARM OGN
FLARM can be used for tracking, although that is not commonly done in the USA.

Home designed aprs system utilizing amateur radio repeaters

Home designed aprs system utilizing amateur radio repeaters

I carry a PLB
IGC DROID
IGC Droid
InReach
InReach SE
Spot
transponder. Can't forget that they can help with tracking as well in emergency situations.

4.2a
Specify the type of artificial horizon if answered yes to the above.

Air Avionics (Butterfly vario)
Air Avionics Air Glide S
Air Vario
Air glide
Air-Avionics Display S, ISU
Air-glide vario
AirGlide
Butterfly
Butterfly - currently permanently locked out
Butterfly Vario
Butterfly, Dynon D2 and Stratus 2 wifi to iPhone or iPad
CELL PHONE APP
Cell Phone based
I have NOT purchased the software upgrade for my LX9000.
I have an ancient T&B gyro - not software.
LX
LX
LX
LX 9000
LX 9070 LX V8 AirGlide S
LX 9070 AHRS
LX Nav
LX9000 with AHRS enabled on my new glider.
LX9000, MGL
LX9070
LXNAV
LXNAV S-100
LnavS80
Lxnav, but not currently enabled.
Panel mounted Electric Turn and Bank
S80 has it available as an option, but I do not have that option in part because it is not allowed at contests.
XCsoar mini AH display.
air glyde
none.

4.6

Please comment on any available technology that you would like to be newly allowed in aircraft as per the contest rules.

4.5 comment... I answered no, but depending on my available resources and equipment prices I would consider adding ADS-B when I am able to.
ADS-B out TABs system is a real alternative to ELT's. With costs for a TABs system at ~$500 or less... and no annual fees... Aeron's ADS-B tracking and emergency services would be enhanced. Flightaware.com is receiving the Aeron ADS-B tracks. FlightRadar24.com was able to track Ramy Yanetz's ADS-B system in the Dust Devil Dash flight all the way to landing with 10sec updates all the way to landing in north central Nevada this year.
ADS-B-OUT and IN should be ENCOURAGED for the purposes of collision avoidance with powered aircraft.
Adding authorized GPS source to ADSB this winter - the Flarm GPS data causes too many errors on the FAA monitoring site
Allow any new technology to be used. There is no way enforce what is used in the cockpit
Allow link up with programs such as SkySight or TopMeteo
Although I've not needed it, I don't like having to disable AHRS during a contest. Requiring a gopro to sort out near misses after the fact might be useful and would be an alternative for the cloud flying prevention.
Although it is not currently allowed, Remote Thermal Detection technology will eventually happen. I have been working on making this happen on and off for the past 34 years. It should be allowed when it happens. This will make soaring more popular, less
frustrating and somewhat safer. The most likely way this technology will work is for very limited ranges (~1000 feet). This does not take away from pilot skills such as cloud reading, hawk spotting and other currently used methods.

Any technology should be allowed. Nothing should be mandatory, except transponder and ADSB out.

Artificial horizon is a big plus on lower visibility days when the course line is into the afternoon sun. Nobody stays 500' clear of cloud base. If someone climbs above cloud base you can see it in the IGC file so why disallow? Of much bigger issue is the use of FLARM as a mandatory requirement and ADSB from a safety perspective.

Either get rid of the prohibition on gyro instruments (that's my preference) or enforce the rule.

I do not see the need for rules forbidding any technology in the cockpit that adds to safety. The rules do not allow cloud flying - but getting caught on top is a possibility. Tracking is easy and cheap these days - rules do not allow you to track your competitors. SSA or anyone can not stop cheating - the rules exist to stop unwanted behavior - our sport is small so everyone knows within minutes if anyone is dangerous, breaking rules or cheating. There is no need for the SSA Rules to do what the pilots would do themselves - Being Shunned is sufficient incentive to follow the rules.

I have experimented with the "goTenna" gizmo with the GliderLink app. It offers info on the location of other gliders with similar equipment, at ranges that are longer than FLARM. Currently not quite within the rules, but I think that at regionals where pilot-to-pilot communication is allowed in principle, it's a better choice than cluttering the contest voice frequency. Since it is an unencrypted broadcast the info is available to anybody (if they get the hardware), so it's not a team secret.

None

Please, let's try to keep the cost from climbing completely out of control.

Reading between the lines, it looks like the RC is considering making artificial horizons, legal! DON'T DO IT! I have seen a Contest glider exit a cloud. Two other contestants admitted cloud flying and icing up a tad! This was reported to SSA and nothing was done! When are we going to enforce the rules? After Joe Glider finds Joe Cessna in a cloud? PS, the guys I saw exit a cloud, won the contest! Both held Commercial Licenses and flew IFR on a regular basis. They had their cell phones attached to their canopy in a Duo Discus.

Remove all technology bans. Tech is way cheaper than gliders, so the cost argument is pretty silly.

Until the cost comes down I have no plan to install a transponder, ADS B Out, or Flarm unit in my club owned (rented) glider. My glider makes 3 ships (DG-505; Std. Cirrus, Open Cirrus) available to members for use at a contest.

Weather radar.

Wifi weather. See LXNav

With the LXNAV boxes becoming popular, you will see WX in the cockpit used widely this year.

ads-b already installed
everything

weather radar - see storms coming

7.14a

Comment on finish penalties.

10 sec/ft is way too harsh. 10 sec/m (3 sec/ft) is still harsh (corresponds roughly to passing on the last 0.2 kt thermal) but would seem more appropriate.

10 sec/ft penalty changes in harshness depending on the length and competitiveness of the day. The point penalty less so I think in most circumstances

10 seconds per foot is way too high a price to pay. On a 3 hr task (180 minutes), a minute is worth 5.6 points Finishing 50 feet low (i.e. not much) would extract a 500 second penalty (8...3 minutes, or 47 points on a 3-hour task. Might be OK to make the penalty gradual (5 sec/ft first 100 feet, the 10 sec after that)....

Altitude penalties encourage safe flight. Time penalties do not.

Archaic laws that do not improve safety.

As I understand it, the finish cylinder with a floor was instituted to provide safety during a contest finish and landing. I think it works and should be kept and not modified much

As long as the penalty makes it favorable to take a 0.5-knot thermal over finishing low I'm fine.

Current rule is fine

Eliminate finish penalties. Reinstate rolling finishes.

FAI rules

Finish penalties should be only 1 minute per 100 feet low

Follow the FAI rules, stop reinventing or thinking you are smarter.

French time proposal is interesting because it takes into account time gained/lost by climbing to avoid a low finish. It is more understandable than a point penalty. Cochran at one time when finish penalties were introduced stated it was worth taking a 0.25 kt climb to avoid the penalty.

Give some though to use of motors during low finishes. At the PanAm speed points were garnered for a low finish and motor home from a 5km finish which wasn't deemed safe to attempt in a non-motored glider. This largely resulted in few people voting to give the FES gliders a 2% handicap advantage because the performance degradation was recovered in other ways.
Go for FAI rules.
Harsh penalty should exist for low finishes
Higher is safer. No issue with higher finish heights.
I believe this is a safety issue. Finishing below the minimum should be penalized harshly.
I don't like them at all. Any pilot that us unsafe at the finish can be penalized as the committee seems appropriate.
I favor harsh POINT penalties for low finishes, in part to reduce the number of competitors who get disqualified for REALLY low finishes, and in part to reduce attempts at last-minute climbs near the finish, that becomes a safety hazard too. Even more than this I think it is critical that the finish line/cylinder be far enough away and above the airport of the contest that finishers do have altitude and time to sort out landing patterns and deal reasonably with the potential for a jammed runway and multiple pilots landing simultaneously. Much of these issues revolve around the airport hosting the contest -- airports with a lot of runways and area are obviously much safer. To be candid, I refuse to fly our regionals held at Harris Hill (Elmira) because the field is simply too small for a contest ... and I learned to fly at Torrey Pines ... and I happily fly our regionals at Dansville. -- these two alternate years for the Region 3 contests. You asked about whether we'd be willing to host a contest -- 5B2 is not a good place for a contest, for reasons I won't go into. But I'd be happy to help hold a contest at a better site.
I prefer finish geometry that makes finish penalties unlikely. Crazy high cylinder floors close to the airport combined with harsh finish penalties encourage low thermalling on the last leg when the pilot still has an easy glide to the airport.
I think a hard finish cyl is a good thing. If someone comes in low, there could be a way to climb up to finish after entering the cyl.
I think there is a tendency to make the safety finish altitude too high in National contests. The penalties should be determined by the CD for each contest, if the situation is warranted.
I would favor a much more simplified system based on 50ft increments. 1-50 ft below assigned finish height=20 point score subtraction. 51-100 ft below assigned finish height=40 point subtraction etc. keep it simple and if you like harsh. I know finish height penalties are here to say, but I have never been a fan of them.
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It works now for Regionals.
It's not the finish it's the low final glide. Go get the traces from Uvalde 2018 and watch the carnage break out the minute low finishes are allowed.
Low finishes, especially with opposite direction landings, are a safety hazard, IMO.
No comment. I usually finish too high
No low finish penalty. Restore rolling finish.
None
Quit making the sport boring. Low Passes and Contest Finishes bring spectators. Penalties and rules are killing this sport.
Slightly too low minimal penalty Moderately too low moderate penalty Very low harsher penalty Sometimes sink on a final glide can cause a low finish, its luck of the draw ans IMHO should not be a high penalty. But if a pilot is final gliding at 130 knots and finishes low there should be a substantial penalty, tough to figure this out thou, takes time
The finish height should be set low enough that most pilots would consider it dangerous to finish that low. Then pilots finishing at normal height wouldn't have to worry and stare at their screens trying to make sure they don't accidentally incur penalty points for eyeballing the final glide once the airport is in sight.
The finish is always close to the airport - the penalties need to be increased until the option to finish low is as bad as landing out. a low finish should be a disaster to your score.
The finish penalty should be just enough it stings but not enough that it would necessarily take someone out of the running at a National contest. The finish time should run until they land and come to a complete stop plus the racer should also be assessed an arbitrary 25pt penalty.
The minimum finish height is a "virtual hard deck" and there is no excuse for pilots to bust it.
There is no competitive reason to lower the "old" US rule that below 200' the pilot has landed out -- other than to encourage cutting it close and negatively impacting safety. I would stick with the first 200' zone having a point penalty and below that treating the finish as a land out. I have never been at a contest where I recall a contestant saying that he opposed the landout rule. Nor have I ever been at a contest where a contestant said he stumbled into an low finish penalty because the weather changed. Low altitude low energy finishes (the two usually go together) are needlessly dangerous.
We are now very similar to FAI, now that we eliminated the "Cochrane landout" and FAI has seen the insanity of continuing the direct finish. Lever B
Whether time or points based, finish penalties should be proportional to max points that day. That is, on a 1000 point day, the full penalty, if any, is assessed. If max points due to devaluation are, say 500, then the finish penalty would be 50% of the nominal amount. On a heavily devalued day, the finish penalty for a modest altitude deficit can be a rather large fraction of the pilot's score.
Iets go back to 50' and put some excitement back into this sport.
time penalty vs points penalty - if adopted - should be adjusted for our often very much higher finish heights. Otherwise they are too harsh. 1000' penalty would be 10k seconds which is 2.78 hrs.

7.15
Please provide any general comments on the subject of the FAI Rules trials for 2020.

7.6 Note that no workable "start speed limit" scheme has been found. 7.12 FAI rules always give distance credit to the center of the cylinder, so up to 1 km more than pilots typically fly.

Adopt the FAI Club Class list too. No more D2's ASW-28's, and LS-8's in Club Class.

After reading X and UH's recap of FAI rules I think they add too much danger to a already dangerous activity, glider racing. I go to contests for pure fun, don't like the gaggling aspect the FAI rules lean toward...Too much risk and stress IMHO

Changing the rules to FAI rules will have no effect on WGC results. Longer, harder tasking at US contests, more racing pilots in the sport, and a better selection process are much more important.

Do it as soon as possible it will help US pilots to do better in the worlds. The White paper by Nixon and Good was a hack job with the intent to influence this survey. They should be removed from any involvement with the SSA racing rules and contest committees. They should be reported to the SSA president for misconduct.

Do it or don't. Make a decision early so people can prepare. Don't wait until a week before the first contest.

FAI rules

FAI vs US rules? I guess I've followed the issues peripherally for the last couple of years. but honestly can't say that adoption one way or the other will affect my contest participation. I do like assigned racing tasks when they are called. I'm not sure that adoption of FAI rules will produce better US World teams. Seems like we are already sending our top pilots.

Fly FAI rules for a couple of years. See how we like them.

For regionals FAI rules should be optional. At Nationals they should be encouraged. We should train as we are going to compete.

Give it a go.... However, I don't relish the idea of landouts caused by the CD's calling tasks that "stretch the day" I fly contests for fun, sometimes do not have ground support and landouts definitely decrease my enjoyment of a contest.

Have not heard/seen a report on how well the Uvalde FAI experiment went?

I do not support it

I don't have really strong feelings on most of these questions. My concern mostly is providing clarity on what the rules actually are, especially as a relatively new contest pilot.

I expect a switch to FAI rules will decrease contest participation, once pilots learn the implications. Increased gaggling in low, weak conditions, start gate roulette, and more land-outs all have the potential for safety issues that most of us want to avoid. . FAI rules encourage gaggling on difficult days much more than US rules, and this effect cannot be effectively offset by local rules. Under FAI rules, on a task when there is any reasonable chance of landing out, the rational course of action is to join and stay with a gaggle, the larger the better. This will disproportionately be the case on days with weak, low condition when large gaggles are least safe. The benefits of flying with a gaggle often lead to late start gate roulette, which in turn often results in late starts and the associated land-outs at the end of the day. Sure, most land-outs are safe, but as Kawa demonstrated recently, sometimes they are not. Big gaggles and start gate roulette are good practice for someone going to a WGC. but another reason for the rest of us to choose OLC instead of a contest.

I feel we are overlooking two important effects when considering a change like this. The first is on participation. Our sport is dying generally and competition in particular. It's great to say we ought to be flying more aggressive tasks (longer, assigned tasks, no MATS, etc.) but those will increase landouts—which will definitely have a negative impact on participation. Yeah, putting a U.S. pilot on the podium is great. But if he/she is among the last 25 pilots flying competition in this country, it won't mean much. Second, any changes to the Rules that require glide computer software developers to make a change should be avoided if possible. The "simple" change to a 0.5 mile cylinder was ill conceived and caused at least one group to have to issue two releases (one to change it and another to change it back).

I like start lines, finish lines, and assigned tasks. Not assigned in name only mini turn area tasks. When you say FAI classes for 2020 do you also include Club Class? That is an FAI Class... I do not prefer the new FAI handicaps. Seems to me they adjusted the handicap to intentionally shift the advantage to certain gliders. That's not the point of handicapping.

I like the idea but it would require a lot of education for most pilots in a short time period.

I participated in 7 FAI Category 1 contests. From my experience, I have some observations on the subject: 1. The experience we (US Team Pilots) need is in flying long Assigned Tasks (racing tasks) Our weakness is lack of experience flying in and out of weather and flying late in the day. Also we lack tactical experience which Assigned Tasks requires 2. The US start cylinder is by far safer and fairer. Everyone starts with the same energy (out the top) and hopefully below clouds if CD sets max height correctly. The amount of cloud flying in starts in Europe is ridiculous. 3 The rest of the Rules differences (other than start) are of minor consequence.

I strongly feel that we should not allow ground to pilot communication. I think if crews can communicate weather and tracking to competitors it will lead to a huge advantage to some pilots for a couple of reasons. For one, competitors who are crewless will have a huge disadvantage once on task. Secondly, this will lead to the requirement to spend more money on technology (or crews) to be competitive at a high level. I think these disadvantages will primarily fall on the younger group of competitors.

Considering one of the biggest barriers into the sport is cost, I think this is not a good idea.

I sympathize with the US team aspirants who are concerned that US racing does not adequately prepare them for WGC. I agree that this is the case. WGC has a very different tactical environment. However, Captain Obvious observes... rules are a secondary influence on the tactical racing environment. The primary inputs to the tactical environment are race venue (latitude, terrain, time of year, etc), weather, task setter and competitors. There is -zero- chance of creating a WGC tactical race environment in the US through changes to rules. All of the primary inputs will be substantially different.

I think a 1 year experiment to force folks to more fully understand the FAI rules is a good idea. A poll taken after that would be more informed for deciding what to do next.

I think if the plan is to move to FAI rules, do it one time. Do not stagger it over multiple years so we have to learn three different sets of rules.
I think there need to be experimenting and flexibility given to the CD - not all rules are good for all locations and modifications should not be viewed as negative.

It might be less risky to try running just one Nationals in 2020 by FAI rules rather than all the FAI Nats.

It would be good to let pilots sort out for themselves whether they want FAI Rules or not and the best way I see to do this is to give them an opportunity for a couple of years to experience them. We certainly want our Team pilots getting better acquainted to them.

It would be pretty silly to jump to "classic" FAI scoring rules only to see them deleted in 2 years in favor of the "alternative" scoring rules which are very similar to SSA scoring.

I'm excited to continue the FAI rules experiment. Seriously though, what is an "FAI class"? I assume that's all classes except Sports, right?

Just do it, use the FAI rules including SeeYou for scoring.

Keep MAT in Regionals only until FAI implements the handicapped distance task - which is fairer and has much less in-cockpit computer workload than a MAT and achieves nearly all the same goals in terms of accommodating different glider performance. Adopt the FAI-approved US scoring proposal for 2020.

Keep the test simple by using US rules with specific exceptions done by waiver.

Many national level pilots do not aspire to fly in the worlds. Let's not turn the nationals into a WGC practice drill, especially when our system is better.

Please pay attention to the fact FAI may change drastically within the 2 to 4 years. Be aware it takes two years for those rules to be implemented at IGC level. If it takes another year in USA, you might be applying FAI rules with a big delay. Some of the current FAI rules under discussion may well be much closer to the current US rules than you think!

Q 7.12 if I understand is relevant to a turn area task (or do you mean racing task?). For a racing task with small turn cylinders it makes little difference. Surely anyone keen on winning has a computer capable of telling them when to turn. For turn area tasks, credit should definitely be given, as the main use of this task (in our contest at least - Truckee FAI) is to set a task that can fairly accommodate a wide range of glider performance. Fast gliders fly to the back of the cylinder, slow gliders turn at the near edge.

Ref 7.1/7.2: Retain MAT task for use ONLY when there is a danger of losing a contest day necessary to make a valid contest. Ref 7.11: More investigation/definition required. Ref 7.3: Type of units used is totally irrelevant to the intent of the rules. Suggest English units merely to facilitate use of existing instrumentation and sooth ancient minds.

The change is relevant only to a small number of US pilots who might fly in international contests. Those folks will compete and fly whatever rules SSA applies. We already have a problem recruiting enough new pilots to fly contests. The FAI rules are not as safety friendly or as flexible as the current US rules. I think the move to FAA standards is a poor choice, and contrary to the goal of increasing contest participation at the entry level.

The evolution of US rules have made contests safer. Do not move towards FAI rules.

The key is a balance of racing and area tasks to keep the contest fun. Only using area tasks on iffy days is a blunder. At the PanAm we had mainly racing tasks which was a great puzzle but resulted in some less experienced pilots retrieving more than they are accustomed to.

There seems to be a misconception in the soaring community that a shift to FAI rules means team flying, ground support, mass landouts, etc., as are all common at World Gliding Championships. The current proposals seem geared to shift us to FAI tasking and scoring, both of which are generally similar to current US rules (coming from a pilot with recent experience racing under FAI rules). A lot of the advantages of US rules (e.g. limited handicapping in Standard Class, an airport landing bonus, etc.) should be incorporated into a US version of FAI rules. Marketing for the shift to FAI rules should better reflect the reality of the Rules Committee’s proposal.

There should be no issue with using FAI rules (i.e., mostly tasking, scoring, penalties) with specific "local procedures" stated for US competitions, such as max start height specified with 2 minutes rule and starting through the top if a cylinder is used, 10-Km (about 6-sm) radius start cylinders, airport bonus rule, etc.

This is like Brexit. It's already been voted for. Why are we voting again after not following the will of the pilots in 2018?

Time to fly by IGC rules, so many years lost of true competition flying

Try to follow FAI rules as much as possible.

US have good glider pilots we need to move to FAI rules to make them competitive in International competitions. Remember not everyone has time or money to participate to Contests outside USA just to train for FAI rules, good or bad that is what the rest of the world is using.

Whatever we choose will generally be ok, but lets deside on a standard and stick to it. Competators can then develop effective strategies within the given rules. A continual adjustment/changing of the rules only complicates matters and builds distrust and argument. Develop a set then lets stick with it. Fair for everyone that way.

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Why are we focusing so much on the WGC? Shouldn't our focus be on maximum safety and fun for the majority of contest participants? Do we really have such an inferiority complex about our WGC placements that we feel the need to drag hundreds of pilots (who will never go to the WGC) into an entirely different rule-set? The very top percentage of our contest pilots who wish to go to Worlds and do well are definitely amazing pilots, and are definitely passionate about racing. But they do not drive the bulk of contest participation, they don't staff the majority of contest events, and they don't necessarily contribute the most to general SSA (or even contest) education or promotion. The SSA exists to promote Soaring in the USA, and should focus on serving the bulk of its members; not a small cadre of the most-competitive people. Please note that I say this as a former race-car driver (SCCA, NASCAR, and ICSCC) - I am no stranger to a highly competitive spirit or the drive to be the best in a sport. But even "if" we switched to FAI rules and encouraged team-flying during some US contests, it would not guarantee a dramatically different result...
at the WGC events - yet it DOES guarantee a huge amount of work for contest staff and average everyday contestants in learning new rules and having to try to figure out how to "keep up" with the top dogs in all of the new dimensions that will suddenly be required in order to do well at the US Nationals (such as finding a teammate to fly with).

With a typical task time around 3 hours, ≈ 1e4 seconds ... 10 s/ft is roughly a 1% penalty per foot ... and that is a stiff penalty. I'd be for it except for concern about how these heights get measured ... and we are talking about the damned GNSS heights ... yes? These heights are lousy (intrinsically) and they are actually getting worse as units start "using" GLONASS/BeiDou-3/ ... and eventually Galileo too! While in theory these multiple systems improve accuracy the reality is that most commercial GNSS chipsets are degrading accuracy to get ever-lower power consumption and improved update rates. It's not uncommon to see 10+ meter elevation variations from a GPSS unit that is fixed and not moving. The problem is how to measure violations accurately enough to avoid endless wrangling. I don't think we can mandate differential GPSS for contest FRs ... still too expensive, IMO. But that would be a great thing ... if one could afford WAAS/LASS

Would lead to increased gaggleing which is dangerous. Would lead to increased land outs which can be dangerous. Unlimited start height gives unfair advantage to some that might be lucky enough to find wave or other unusual lift before start. Ground to pilot communication leads to additional resources needed which a lot pilots do not have access to. Safety finish would be eliminated. At the recent region 10 safety finish was used successfully. Would eliminate task changes in the air. This is highly desirable with unforeseen weather changes. I see no logic for sending me into marginal or dangerous weather. Would eliminate the MAT. This is a useful task. The long MAT is especially useful in regionals with a wide variety of ships and pilot skills. My Clearnav does not support a .5km turn area for ATs. I don't want to spend $$$$ replacing a perfectly good system.

You play the way you practice

7.16

Please provide any general comments on the subject of moving to FAI rules for 2021.

A great idea providing it doesn't mean all racing tasks.

Agree we should be under FAI by 2021

As a comment to using FAI based rules. From what I can see the result of FAI rules is a LOT of gaggle flying/racing, actually rare not to. For many years the USA rule were optimized to reduce gaggle flying because of safety concerns. I agree with this and have always supported minimizing gaggle racing. Until such time as the FAI rules are changed and successfully reduce gaggle racing, I will not support their adoption.

Bring it on.

Changes the US rules to capture the most advantageous features of the FAI, then in following years add more changes to transition US pilots at a rate that causes minimal pushback.

Changing the rules to FAI rules will have no effect on WGC results. Longer, harder tasking at US contests, more racing pilots in the sport, and a better selection process are much more important.

Do it for all contests

Extend trial through 2021.

FAI rules

I am not for a strict move to FAI - SSA needs to maintain some flexibility is nationals and much more in regionals. Flying contests scares many pilots, adding more complication by dictating strict adherence to rules will just add one more hurdle. We have to have faith that people running contests know what they are doing and have the spots interest in mind.

I don't think a high percentage of US pilots understand the details.

I generally agree with transitioning to FAI rules while at the same time encouraging IGC to make changes Rick Sheppe supports for safety and fairness. We should not seriously discourage pilots from flying in Club Class and Sport Class competitions and maintain U.S. handicaps for Club Class. At the Regional level... prohibit ground support for tactical flying. Make a modest number of Local U.S. modifications to FAI rules for U.S. contests in line with our current U.S. rules.

I think it would decrease participation at all but the highest levels of competition and largely eliminate the sporting category most of us really enjoy. I don't think that's the direction to take sporting competition.

I would like to see the US adopt SeeYou for scoring and integration with SoaringSpot once the shift to FAI rules is complete. In a similar vein, I would like to see US contests integrated with the IGC pilot ranking system.

I would prefer to stay with US rules for the foreseeable future.

I'm against it generally for the reason stated in my answer to 7.15.

I'm of the belief that FAI rules will decrease participation in the long run. I don't believe the rules are the primary reason we aren't competitive at the WGC. I think if the rules favor gaggle flying some pilots (myself included) will be less inclined to fly at Nationals. I think the USA rules system develops better individual flying decision making - this may be different than the skills necessary to fly competitively in gaggles. I think our concern should be participation at SSA contests, not WGC rankings.

If the point is to get comfortable with FAI rules we should adopt what we can including the use of the metric system.

If we start landing more people out, fewer will attend contest.

If we're doing this, do it in 2020 to allow US Teams to practice and do it all at once.

In general I favor moving to the FAI rules, at least for all Nationals, simply because if we are to be a world-level soaring country ... we need to play the game by the international rules. This means that if some rules aren't great, we work to get them changed internationally. Regionals however need to be safety & newbie-friendly ... whatever it takes ...
It's not so traumatic a change as some on the RC seem to think. If you want to keep the airport bonus or engine start procedures I doubt anyone will complain.

Just Do It...

Just move to FAI rules do not wait

Make the move to the FAI rules. We will perform better on the international stage.

May take more than one year to work through the regional contest considerations.

Opposed. US rules are safer and less daunting thus promoting more participation.

Require minimum 40% or two days of Assigned Tasks in Regionals and 60% or three days in Nationals Keep US start rules unchanged. The rest of the SSA vs FAI rule differences are irrelevant to safe, fair, and fun racing. Do whatever is politically best! Just don't spend too much time debayangels on a pin...

Same as 2020.

Same as above.

Same as point 7.15 above.

See Above

See above please

See above. Let's keep some perspective on what's important. We have FAI classes that are almost defunct in the U.S. (e.g. Standard). Knocking out a few pilots who won't come to a contest if they have to rely on friends to come pick them up from fields when the landout percentage goes up significantly because we want to "test" our pilots just like the Europeans make no sense to me.

Should have been done in 2019 as the opinion poll results were clear. Terrible question. Clearly an anti FAI rule, pro US rule agenda here in this poll, as per usual.

Suggest FAI rules and scoring with US units. Keep the cylinder/start out of top option. Have the unlimited height line start available as an option.

The evolution of US rules have made contests safer. Do not move towards FAI rules.

This will require 2 sets of rules. National- much more like FAI Regional- much like current including MAT as a usable option.

Try to follow FAI rules as much as possible.

Understanding that the poll addresses use of FAI rules only for Nationals, it will be critically important for the survival of US racing to keep existing US rules for our Regional competitions. A great deal of thought and history has gone into the evolution of the US Rules causing them to be tailored to the US racing pilot community, including contest organizers. US rules do a much better job of providing a format for introducing pilots to racing and for offering the option of lower-stress racing attractive to many of our (now mostly) older pilots. Moving to FAI Rules for Regionals would be a huge mistake. Sports Class is not an FAI class. Don't eliminate Sports Class Nationals. The push toward FAI rules appears to be driven most strongly by our top US racers. Their primary goal seems to be to make US racing a better training and US-team selection format for FAI racing. This is a reasonable goal and our change to FAI racing would probably help. However, our success at the WGCs will depend not just upon US pilots becoming more familiar with FAI rules and procedures, but more importantly getting better at tactical gaggling, flying Assigned Tasks, and flying more aggressive tasks. Unfortunately, there are many National pilots who have little interest in flying contests with mostly Assigned Tasks, lots of gaggling, and significantly more aggressive tasking. Changing our Nationals to better train our US Team pilots will likely drive away many of us who enjoy flying Nationals but have no interest in being on the US Team and we won't have big gaggles at National contests if participation shrinks even further. It's also worth noting that US Rules currently allow a CD to not set MATs, to set more Assigned Tasks, and to set more aggressive tasks. A change to FAI rules is not required to do this. This is a matter for the CD, not for the rules-makers. Without adoption of many features of the current US Rules into Local Procedures (Handicapped Std Class, task changes in the air, no ground-up communications, no tactical pilot-pilot communications enabling teaming, safety finish, airport landing bonus, US start system) participation at US Nationals will likely be reduced and safety may be compromised. Would it be simpler to keep the US Rules with some tweaks and waivers to mimic FAI rules, rather than switch to FAI rules and then rebuild key US features into Local Procedures? If you end up at about the same place, why go through this? If part of this exercise is aimed at eventually replacing Winscore with SeeYou-competition scoring, please do this carefully. There may be some unintended consequences. Winscore is integrated into the SSA website/reporting system, handicaps, pilot ranking lists, etc. We also continue to get outstanding support from Guy Byars. Will SeeYou be as supportive? FAI rules are slowly moving closer to US rules. Having spent lots of time immersed in both FAI and US rules, I assure you that the current FAI rules are not really any better than US rules. It would indeed be better for our WGC oriented pilots to train with FAI rules and tasking. But will this be better for the overall US racing community? Safety and participation should continue to be top priorities. Thanks for all your work and for tackling these issues. Ken Sorenson

We want to be VERY careful to not make a rule change which is

Why are we focusing so much on the WGC? Shouldn't our focus be on maximum safety and fun for the majority of contest participants? Do we really have such an inferiority complex about our WGC placements that we feel the need to drag hundreds of pilots (who will never go to the WGC) into an entirely different rule-set? The very top percentage of our contest pilots who wish to go to Worlds and do well are definitely amazing pilots, and are definitely passionate about racing. But they do not drive the bulk of contest participation, they don't staff the majority of contest events, and they don't necessarily contribute the most to general SSA (or even contest) education or promotion. The SSA exists to promote Soaring in the USA, and should focus on serving the bulk of its members; not a small cadre of the most-competitive people. Please note that I say this as a former race-car driver (SCCA, NASCAR, and ICSCC) - I am no stranger to a highly competitive spirit or the drive to be the best in a sport. But even "If" we switched to FAI rules and encouraged team-flying during some US contests, it would not guarantee a dramatically different result at the WGC events - yet if it DOES guarantee a huge amount of work for contest staff and average everyday contestants in learning new rules and having to try to figure out how to "keep up" with the top dogs in all of the new dimensions that will suddenly be required in order to do well at the US Nationals (such as finding a teammate to fly with).
Comment on Airfield Landing Bonus for motor gliders.

25 points is a non determinant for my decision to head for an airport. If the goal is to increase the use of airfields for landouts then increase the incentive. Perhaps award some speed points, maybe in proportion to the maximum task distance achieved prior to the landing. This would really play well when the nearest airport is behind. If 800’ is safe for a low save it should be high enough for a safe finish without a penalty.

800 ft/2 sm is a good compromise. The motorglider can always choose to land for the bonus if a low save attempt is desired. Note that this rule is the Airfield LANDING Bonus

Airport bonus given if glider is at 800’ at 2 mi, 600’ at 1 mi, and 400’ over the airport boundary. If engine was deployed and did not start, it would still make the field. Even though an engine could be started on final at certain airports, this should be a good compromise.

And eliminate altitude restriction. Time to return to personal responsibility and common sense.

Eliminating the airfield bonus does not preclude an agressive racing pilot from following the spirit of FAI rules and landing out. Keep the airfield bonus as a modification to U.S. rules under FAI.

Height is not an issue to me - the distance should be 2 sm to keep away from power traffic and more importantly sky divers. 1 sm and 800 is too low and too close to avoid either. Most gliders have sustainers only - to have to land will make take AB out of the decision process so pilots will not go to airports - better to try a low save over a field and take your chances the motor will start.

I am voting to "Land for Bonus" but really want the Elimination of the Airfield Bonus all together. We need to move away from rules that reward motorglider pilots for being lazy.

I have a sustainer engine yet I fly as if I do not have an engine. There are also fields which have more room to land on than some airports, especially at 21m spans. Eliminate the airfield landing bonus.

I think the "low-save" limit should be lowered to 500 and 2 sm from the airport. 500 feet over an airport is enough to set up an approach with the option of motoring away from the pattern or landing if there the motor doesn't fire off. Most candidate airports have low traffic density, so pattern conflicts risk is low. 2 sm radius makes sense in that the center point, as defined in the contest data base, can and often is not really the middle of the airport, and to be within 1 mile might place you outside the landing pattern, where you should be for safety.

I think there are 2 separate issues. The bonus should stay for non-motor gliders but the distance/altitude requirements for motor gliders may cause safety issues

I'm sorry to say that I don't think sailplanes and motor gliders can compete fairly ... and I've flown both. This is particularly true of the new electrics, and electric sustainers. The problem is simply that if you know you have a motor, particularly a reliable one, you can take risks in difficult transitions that no sane sailplane pilot would take. It used to be that the unreliability of the motors, and the prospect of having that damned big spoiler hanging out in the wind and not starting, meant that flying a motor glider in a contest carried some real risks of being in a jam worse than with a sailplane ... and that made the motor-glider pilots wary of going into bad terrain low, just like real sailplane pilots. But now the flick of a switch will reliably get you out of there and even get you home, and that just changes the whole equation. Hearing them whine about the airport bonus is ridiculous.

IMO motor gliders should land at the airport. Not needing a 4-5 hour retrieve is a significant advantage. Even a short retrieve requires disassembly and reassembly. The landing bonus should be retained but only if one lands. A motor glider can take off and motor home and still get a bonus. Unfortunately a turbo does not have that option. So be it. All things cannot be equal!

If a motor glider starts the engine, his score should end there, instantly. If they want the airfield bonus, then land at an airfield other than the home field. No motor start allowed. If you can not land your glider without starting the engine, you are not a glider pilot. You are a power pilot who sometimes shuts down the engine.

If you decide not to adopt FAI Rules after 2021 then I would keep the 2018 Rule for motorgliders.

If you want to keep the bonus, make the motorglider height and distance a cone similar to the safety finish. Make max distance something like 3 miles and min distance and height something reasonable like the 1 mile 800 ft currently in place.

If your motor does not start, you want to be in or very near the pattern. If you have a motor, you should NEVER assume it's guaranteed to start. Assume the worse and prepare for the best.

It is not reasonable for a self sustainer to call on unicom, enter the pattern and then climb away.

Last sentence is remarkably silly. MG pilots always have the same low-save option as non-MG pilots: simply don't use the motor.

Mandatory Landing to claim bonus.

Motor gliders have always had the "same right to a low save". If it doesn't work out, you land. I think we should eliminate the special motor glider rules.

Motorgliders have huge advantage over prue gliders

Motorgliders have such a advantage period, who knows how to score this?

Motors have advantages and disadvantages. Let's keep it balanced and not make the sport even more expensive.

No airfield bonus for motor gliders.

No comment -- cause I do not have an engine.
Comment on penalties.

"Discretion" is subject to personal bias. Penalties should be clear but modest (small), for all but egregious sportsmanship or safety infractions. Remember that our sport is based on pleasurable participation, and a whopping penalty for a minor screw up might discourage already-flagging participation.

Allow CD altitude but expand recommended penalties.

As much as possible penalties should be defined within the rules for consistency.

CD discretion, maximum penalty must be set in rules.
CD latitude puts the CD in a no-win situation. No matter what the CD decides, some will accuse the CD of being too lenient and the penalized pilot will accuse the CD of being too punitive. With a preassigned penalty, everyone knows what to expect. I've finished under the line a few times. Took my lumps without complaint.

CD's know what's going on. If some guy is being an ass, hit him hard. If it was a honest mistake and the pilot owns it, let the CD be a on the spot judge.

CD's often work with heir peers and friends. Giving discretion to the CD is opens an avenue for subjectivity and peer pressure in some instances.

FAI rules

Give the CD latitude where a penalty hasn't been designated already. I would suggest the RC try to figure out what violations would likely require a designated penalty so as to avoid politics inserting themselves into a CD's decision.

Having been a CD, I will refuse to be a CD in the future if I am not allowed to use my judgment to ensure a safe contest or to adequately correct an improper score or contestant behavior. Not because I believe that my judgment is flawless, but because EVERY contest site is unique, and the mix of pilots and gliders and skill-levels at that event is unique. No matter how complex the rules are, they can NEVER cover every single instance or deal with nuances or extenuating circumstances. Ask yourself: How much to people love the inflexibility of the FARs?!

I had a CD who wanted me to resign from the contest because he THOUGHT he saw me circling in line with the takeoff runway. My track shows I was circling off the side of the runway. He saw someone else. Pilots need protections from wacky CDs.

I think pre-assigned recommended penalties should be available. But the CD should have discretion to modify it. A recommended ranges of penalties could be available. For example Penalty for violation of rule X has a recommended penalty of between 100-300 points.

I think the CD deserves some latitude, however some categories of penalties could help guide him/her. I don't think every possible rule infraction needs to be spelled out.

I trust most, but not all CDs I've flown under to exercise discretion appropriately.

Just what are we talking about here? This is too hypothetical and vague.

KISS and flexible

Latitude puts the CD and fellow competitors in a really tough position. At least, it did in this case example.

Lets make it clear and take the burden off the CD. Then we eliminate hurt feelings that often hurt others beside the pilot and CD. This sport is about fun to make penalties clear like airspace penalties.

Maybe, we need a combination of Preassigned and CD Latitude? Some penalties like airspace violations need to be preset and progressive (i.e. the bigger the violation, the bigger the penalty) without any CD Latitude. However, in the case of unsportsmanlike penalties maybe need some flexibility?

Penalties should be pre assigned, eliminated any subjective nature to race scoring.

Penalty for motor start should be end of scoring. No airfield bonus.

Provide guidance for most rule infractions

Some guidance on a couple of penalties probably wouldn't hurt but you can't cover every possible scenario.

Specific guidance should be given for standardization. CD should be allowed to ask for some variance by presenting extenuating circumstances to the rules committee. There should be clear evidence of the need for the variance rather than a characterization of the event. Characterization example by a CD, "The offending pilot created an unsafe situation because his pattern entry was different." Clear evidence, "The offending pilot created an unsafe situation because his pattern entry caused a near midair collision. The flarm/IGC file was measured at 200 ft CPA."

Specific values but a range. Major violation woud be at the high end. Inadvertent infraction would have the lessor. each contest should have a "jury " nominated by the contestants at the beginning

Standardize point deductions on as many penalty infractions as practical. Do not let the CD bias come into play and that may favor one pilot over another.

Stripping a pilot of ALL the day's points for an airspace violation is draconian. Adding time to the flight and recalculating the speed should be the rule or consider the point of violation a "Landout". I was struggling to stay aloft in an area and circled briefly in what the CD considered prohibited airspace. Being stripped of all my day's points (plus points from a previous day) just was simply too harsh. I spent well over $1200 for the week to fly the contest and this draconian rule was souring. I consider safety-related issues more concerning.

Take the pressure off the CD and preassign penalty points

The rules should be more specific as to what latitude the CD has. There was an instance that come up this season in which the CD asserted that he had no latitude at all, and that seems at odds with the background presented in this question.

Trust the CD, but you can back them up with suggested/historical penalty values.

Under FAI rules, common rules infractions are assigned corresponding penalties (for first and subsequent violations). With the impending shift to FAI rules, the US rules should adopt this approach and give the CD the latitude to award penalties not otherwise covered by the rules and to increase penalties for egregious rules infractions.

Why add to an already difficult job. without guidance the penalty will ALWAYS be viewed as too much or too little - depending if you are getting the penalty or your competitor is.

no win situation here. allow latitude for the cd's.
18m and open class combined works well
A logical way to increase participation.
Adjust standard class handicaps to accommodate older standard class ships (cirrus, asw 19, libelle, dg100...) to encourage competitive competition for younger pilots. Right now, an ls4 or discus is the barrier to entry for standard class.
Also combine 20m unflapped (Duo) into the 15m and Standard into East and West Nationals
Club Class is most popular FAI class in US. We don’t need latest Std gliders to support Club. We need LS6,8, Ventus , D2, ASW28 in 15m/Std mixed class
Combined contests are necessary. A contest with 6 participants is not fun.
Current handicaps are reasonable and combining classes makes the contest operation more financially viable with a larger population of pilots. This may incentivize organizers to hold this contest.
Don't really care, but the standard folks need help and it's fine to combine and have better parties.
Don't want another handicapped race. Standards can race in sports class.
Either we had or have this ability today at the discretion of the contest organizers. Why don't we just do that. Otherwise, I don't support forced combination.
Give each class their own Nationals.
Given the great difficulty in recruiting enough contestants at some national contest (i.e., the Sports Class and standard nationals this year, for example), there does not appear to be a choice but to combine classes. Combining the 15m and Standard is a sensible response to the problem.
Handicapped Std/15M
I don't feel that I have a knowledgeable position on this. I doubt I will ever fly a nationals in my nominal class with any expectation of being "competitive" ... combination of my skill level and flying a Discus (not Discus II)
I dont like combining the two, but I also accept that it may be necessary to preserve the sport.
I think it would be better to combine standard with club class, but in any case I agree with the idea of combining classes to create a more competitive environment.
I think this is a good idea. A larger overall class flying the same task with small difference in performance handicapped. Several countries take this approach.
I would combine standard and club also
I would rather see standard and 15m combine than see standard take over club class.
I'm a Standard Class pilot. The last Standard National I participated in had reasonable turnout. I was signed up and on the road for 2019 Standard Nationals when it was called for weather. I was unable to make the rescheduled date. I am not fundamentally opposed to combined Nationals, but would prefer retaining separate contests unless/until participation numbers dictate otherwise.
I've flown a lot of FAI Combined contests (Std and 15M), handicapped and otherwise. So, yes, let's explore this concept more at the National level.
In favor of 11.1 only if scored separately. Handicaps then not required.
In favor of combining when necessary. Perhaps they can share site/schedule but task/score separately if turnout allows?
It does present a problem for me because I plan to fly in both Nationals, 15 M and Standard. I think the best way to increase attendance at Standard Class Nats is to make sure that the Standard Class is located at a central, prime location where pilots want to fly. TSA had very good attendance in 2018
It should depend on whether potential participants would be deterred by the use of handicaps - some like them and some don't. I only fly Sports so what do I know.
It's inevitable. At minimum hosting them together is a smart contingency plan so we don't get skunked by low attendance in one or the other.
I'm a huge proponent of this. I think increasing the size of our competitions is imperative for increasing the competitiveness of the US Soaring Team at World Gliding Championships because an 8-pilot championship does little to prepare pilots to fly in an environment with 40+ highly competitive pilots. With a combined Standard and 15M Class Nationals, I would also like to see Standard Class pilots receive pilot rankings in both Standard and 15M Class. In addition, for the sake of increasing contest participation, I support adding limited handicapping in a combined Standard and 15M Class Nationals to allow older Standard Class gliders (e.g. LS-4, Discus) and older 15M Class gliders (e.g. ASW-20, Ventus) to compete.
Larger contests seem to me to be more sustainable. to put on a good event you need critical mass. We need as many good large contests as possible - combining as we shrink or expanding if we grow seems reasonable to me.
Loosing Standard class pilots (even while being a declining group) can have a financial adverse affect on running a contest ... especially nationals. I think we have to do it to have standard and possibly even 15M to survive. If it's not a choice, but a final decision to do this here on out, the pilots will not have to fight it out each contest. Just do it.
My first Nationals was a handicapped Standard Class Nats (Montague, 2012) and it was a very enjoyable experience.
No comment.
Not practical without a properly calculated handicap list taking into account ballasted gliders. Currently, rule 5.7.3.4 would apply, which would assign DRY handicaps to ballasted gliders, which would be totally inaccurate and lead to significantly unfair situations
Comments on increasing contest participation.

Note that 15M nats have also seen declines.

Schedule both contests to be held concurrently with same start times and tasks. If there are not enough Standards, combine them with the 15's.

Should join them You need mass to pay the bills

Std class gliders may be flown in 15m with no handicap. Let's not kill the 15m class over this.

The bigger question has to do the venues. Are there enough locations that can hold events and if combining classes will reduce the number of eligible locations it should not be done. If combination is done, of course fair handicaps must be used and automatically be in the scoring program.

The declining participation in the Standard Class probably has more to do with the location of the contest. It looked like the Standard Class Nationals in 2018 were quite successful in Texas. I have very rarely seen a good contest come out of Caesar Creek. I am not going to use my limited and precious vacation time to travel to marginal soaring conditions for 10 days. I am sure if there was a Standard Class Nationals in Nephi, there would be dozens of gliders signed up.

The only benefit is simplifying contest placement by effectively eliminating a class. Attempting to "handicap" the two types will unsatisfying to most. The Std's will be slightly advantaged in the east where there is usually weaker weather and shorter glides and will be seriously disadvantaged in the west with strong weather where they can't fly fast enough. Placing Std so that it is not against Club or 15M allows Std pilots to have the possibility of a healthier class. Pairing with 20M accomplishes this. The motivation fro this seems to come from the USC that wants larger fields in the theory that that helps train pilots better for WGC. My expectation is that all it will do is reduce participation when Std pilots stay home because there is no nationals for their class.

This is essential to keep a competitive pool of standard class pilots. Some work needs to be done on the handicap - Peter Deane has done some great work here but I'm not sure you could sell an 8% handicap advantage to an LS-8 versus ASW-27 at Uvalde or any handicap advantage at Harris Hill.

Very few new Standard class gliders are being purchased. If we don't combine the classes, sooner or later, Standard class will cease to exist - at both the US and FAI level.

already be used

yes if needed

11.5

Comments on increasing contest participation.

"Proper" rotation of classes should allow pilots to fly in their class at a reasonable distance from home 2 out of 3 years. This assumes east/central and west/central rotation. Placing contests is mostly about getting organizers to agree to run events. We also need various sites to allow pilots to expand their skills.

1) Don't worry about it. It is what it is. 2) Never combine 15/18 or 18/Open since most ships these days can do either one. I didn't compete in 18m because I chose Open. If 18m had been at a different place at a different time, I would have flown in an additional contest. 3) More magazine articles extolling the value of competition learning by contest winners writing super good stories.

11.3 - It is sometimes hard to find willing contest sponsors. Doubling the number of contests may make finding contest sponsors more difficult.

11.3 Shifting to East and West Coast Nationals will be detrimental for US Soaring Team performance. A national championship at a strong western site like Nephi in no way prepares a pilot for a weak flatland soaring cite in central Europe. 11.4 Participation should be considered when approving bids for national championships, but we also need to face the reality that there are only a handful of volunteers willing to organize soaring contests Formalizing contest mentorship programs (e.g. having one or more experienced pilots at the contest host daily briefings for new pilots) and/or assigning experienced contest pilots to mentor new racers (as is required for the junior contest rebate program) may help boost contest participation by eliminating psychological barriers for new racing pilots. I would also like to see the limited handicapping currently used in Standard Class expanded to additional classes (e.g. 15M). For example, I do not own a modern 15M glider, but would regularly attend 15M Class Nationals if handicapping allowed my 1980s vintage 15M glider to race competitively.

11.3 would multiply the need for finding hosting sites/clubs, which is already difficult. Another possibility would be to have 2 venues East and 2 venues West, each regrouping more classes as in the IGC format. For example, one venue could regroup Open, 18m, and 2-seaters; and the other venue would regroup Club, Sports, Standard, and 15m. With such a split, insufficient participation in one class would allow moving gliders to another, e.g., not enough 2-seaters would go into Open, or not enough Std would go into Club or Sports (but not into 15m, or if so with no handicap adjustment for Nationals!!)

11.4 does not reflect the reality that there are few bids in a year... we take what we can get from the folks who are willing to organize contests. Also, there should be some consideration as for training people for world competitions. And there's fairness... pilots have a variety of skill sets; some are better at weaker, flatland flying, others in technical, balls to the walls flying in Nevada. A variety of sites is good for the sport.

Also combine 18m and Open plus flapped 20m (Arcus) into East and West Nationals Prohibit gliders with spans greater than 15m from entering into Sports Nationals. This will focus the long wingers into the the two East and West combined long wing Nationals, thus increasing number of contestants to make both Nationals viable.

Being closer to hotels or easy to arrange campers is helpful. Good restaurants nearby is also helpful. It takes less pilot planning to attend a bigger site.

Best to have Nationals at "outstanding" sites, but we need to have a mechanism whereby new outstanding sites can be added to the list. I'm sure there are places that have never had any glider activity that would be excellent soaring sites.
Contests need to be seen as a fun use of people's limited vacation time, first and foremost. The vast majority of contest pilots _know_ that they aren't going to win the event, so you have to provide them other reasons to be there. Fun flying, an outstanding site, a supportive atmosphere, camaraderie & socializing, easy "on-boarding" from flying XC to entering your first contest, etc. These are far more important than rules changes or adding "East and West" events.

East and West nationals, I voted no, but would vote yes if we were hosting two nationals (east and west) at fantastic sites with three combined classes at each.

Even "National Capable" sites can be washed out with bad weather, but perhaps are more likely to produce enough good soaring days to make the long trip worthwhile? Certain sites are marginal in size to take 60+ gliders, that possibly put some people off.

Having 2 nationals is nuts, IMO. That's not a nationals, by definition. And it's no solution to declining participation! Alternating the nationals around has been the tacit understanding, yes? Is the real problem that this means that finding "nationals capable" soaring sites has been a problem in some areas? Yes, the Nationals should be at "Nationals Capable" soaring sites ... but if we are to field a world-level team we must not limit our site selection to the great western-desert sites, because the fact of the matter is that contests are almost always won or lost on the weak days. I expect to fly a nationals one of these days, probably the Club Class. I'm willing to travel ... I flew the Ephrata regionals and the Logan OLC this summer ... driving my rig there and back from Albany NY. Now I will admit that a big part of the draw was to do some western soaring, but those going to a nationals need to see the nationals AS THE DRAW, and presuming I get a bit better than I am now so I think I could at least be middle of the pack at a nationals, then I'd want to fly one. But I bring this up to make a point -- I'll never represent the USA at a world contest, so what is the point of really working to get me to come to a nationals ... to the extent that the nationals are the highest level of competition in our country, held in part to select our world team? What's the point? If the nationals rotated among a very few sites east, west and south, that would be fine.

Having Nationals Capable locations may be an interesting concept but in the long run is it feasible? It puts a lot of pressure on that location and the people involved to be ready to host a Nationals every year or two or three. On the positive side it will allow competition to get more familiar with sites and possibly eliminate some of the local knowledge factor.

Having more contests will just reduce participation at each and hence not be attractive for organizers. Having "National Capable" designation does not recognize the fact that getting a group to run the contests is difficult. You could "designate" us out of having national contests. National contest sites come and go over time.

Hold contests at great sites during the best weather, even if you have to have them again and again at the same site. Parowan was hugely popular until the infrastructure caved in, Look at Nephi, always popular because the odds for great flying is high, that's what we want, the chance for great flying

I am strongly opposed to limiting Nationals to outstanding soaring sites if that means they have consistent super soaring conditions. This would be a poor way to determine who is our champion.

I believe that a strong presence on the international stage will benefit the sport.

I don't think you can split the Nationals and expect the organizers to break even. It would need all the classes to be at the same time and that impacts the folks with multi-class capable gliders. Outstanding sites has some merit. One of the challenges now is we are repeating some sites too often. I've been to Hobbs about 6 times already and often the weather is little better than New England. Nephi is absolutely worth the drive, as was Logan UT.

I have been frustrated by the SSA's take on the Club Class. The Club Class exists to make old, inexpensive gliders within a certain handicap range competitive in a racing class. The Club Class should remain true to this spirit. I have acquired such a glider: a Glasflügel Kestrel 17. My sailplane is fair competition against an ASW-20, and it has the same handicap. It is a beautiful ship, but it is old and does not keep up with Discus 2s, ASW-28s, and LS-8s (which are 3-4 times the price). Despite this, the Kestrel is prohibited from the Club Class because its span is 17m. The Open Cirrus and Diamant (which Steve Leonard wanted to fly during the 2019 Club Class Nationals) also fall into this category. I can immediately think of two US clubs that own Open Cirri, but these clubs can't send these gliders to compete in the Club Class nationals. I know of zero US clubs that own an ASW-28 or a Discus 2. In my opinion, it is outrageous that the new gliders, which are competitive in Standard Class, 15M, Sports Class (and some even in 18M!!!) are permitted to fly in the Club Class, but those of us with legitimate, inexpensive, old, lower-performing gliders are banned because "our spans provide an unfair advantage." The Kestrel fits in the [American] club class handicap range. So does the Open Cirrus. Apparently an extra two meters of wing is a bigger advantage than another 25 years of airfoil/structural design evolution found on the Discus 2 or ASW-28. As I see it, we should either adopt the FAI club class definition and conform to the rest of the world, or expand our definition to be more inclusive. I'm not sure where the span restriction came from. It seems arbitrary and unnecessary, particularly because both the Kestrel and Open Cirrus exist on the Australian Club list, and the FAI list includes a 16M Cirrus B. Either way, the spirit of the Club Class has been lost when I'm not even permitted to take my $15k glider designed in 1967 to compete against $70k gliders designed in 1997. To be clear, I'm fine with the new stuff remaining in the class. However, given that the list is already completely whack, there is "no" basis to limit the rest of us from having fun, too. Isn't the purpose of the Club Class to encourage participation from people who don't have the means to own a hot, new racing ship?

I have no opinion either way on question 11.3 and 11.4. I do know some very good pilots will not fly national contests due to the purpose of the Club Class to encourage participation from people who don't have the means to own a hot, new racing ship? However, given that the list is already completely whack, there is *no* basis to limit the rest of us from having fun, too. Isn't the purpose of the Club Class to encourage participation from people who don't have the means to own a hot, new racing ship? The vast majority of contest pilots _know_ that they aren't going to win the event, so you have to provide them other reasons to be there. Fun flying, an outstanding site, a supportive atmosphere, camaraderie & socializing, easy "on-boarding" from flying XC to entering your first contest, etc. These are far more important than rules changes or adding "East and West" events.

I suggested years ago that a real option for us would be to have east/west coast nationals in alternate years and major team selection nationals at outstanding soaring sites (ideally centrally located) in the intervening years. This would help resolve many participation and logistical burnout issues.

I think both the east/west coast and limited sites is a bad idea. The east/west isn't fair for team selection. Those flying in TX, UT, NV may not be prepared for flying in Europe the same as an east coast pilot. How also can we have a "national champion" when now we have seven nationals and we're holding that times two. Locating the contests will also be difficult and we'd be cutting the competition size in half which is the opposite of what our goal should be - larger competitions.
I think it's important to have the Nationals at a variety of locals to favor overall pilot skill. If the Nationals are used to pick WGC contestants, having only strong conditions may not be ideal to pick pilots flying in weaker European conditions. I would be in favor of experimenting with both ideas but think there is risk in each. Definitely needs to be tested and tried, at this point. I almost did not click either question because I'm just not certain.

It seems to me that we just need to grow more grassroots contest pilots. Club and Sports classes need to be solidly supported. I like Club Class quite a bit - I think it's a dynamic class with young(er) pilots and good racing. New 15m, 18m and Open competitive ships are going into the stratosphere costwise and that is automatically going to limit participation.

It's a big country, having 2 or 3 super-regional "nationals" is certainly no worse than having dozens of "nationals" in Europe. Lack of contest participation is a major problem for competitive soaring in the US. It may be linked to an aging pilot population and declining numbers of glider pilots. It goes beyond the scope something that the Rules alone can solve. But within the Rules process anything reasonable that can be done to encourage increased participation should be considered.

Many of us own 15/18 meter gliders. In 2020 the 15m Nationals are in Nevada and 18m Nationals in Utah. I flew both contests in 2019 but (because of driving distance) will likely fly neither in 2020. Many people do not have time to drive 2500 miles one way to a contest site.

More pilots (who are not chasing the team slots) will travel to venues that provide the best soaring conditions. Non team pilots (like me) fill out the field to make the contest work. They are less likely to sign up for contests held at sites that have a rep for poor weather or are difficult/ very technical.

My vote for east/west is conditional on combining classes with handicaps to get reasonable numbers. All nationals should have at least 20 entrants. Any less on a persistent basis and a class should be combined. E/W in 6 classes is too fragmented. Most other countries combine classes with handicaps. The US is the size of the EU.

National Contests are too long. Add in the travel time, and I no longer have enough vacation time available to reach some of these sights. An east/west coast national contest format would certainly increase participation. I was a part of an organization that had this format and it helped greatly. There would be National Club Class Competition and an American Club Class Competition, both with the same weight, but in different locations.

Nationals are Nationals! Only one site per year. Otherwise there will be arguments. East coast sites favor east coast pilots and vice versa. Doppler is generally a good site but need a cross runway. Nephi is a good site but it is limited in length for 65 gliders. Mifflinwis a good site. Nationals ought to mimic conditions found at the next WGC in at least one of the two preceding years.

No comment.

Perhaps... The definition of "outstanding" is a concern. Site quality is subject to selective amnesia when it comes to typical number of rain days because flying "there" is just so great when the weather is great that you just forget the days off or wimpy miserable soaring.

Pilots have enough trouble with the existing rules. I don't see how a whole new set of rules (FAI) will do anything but discourage pilots from participating, particularly with the threat of causing more gaggling and landouts.

Regarding East and West Coast nationals... I could be convinced either way depending on various arguments. Overall, I think it would dilute participation.

The main factor in holding a well attended contest is location. If I'm going to take 2 weeks vacation to attend an Nationals, I want to go to a site that has a good chance of great soaring conditions.

There would have to be enough "Nationals Capable" sites with several alternatives available.

To improve the overall quality of Us pilots we need to race more. East and West nationals would increase participation and allow those that wish to drive to fly more contests.

Two 18m nationals in one year requires two willing contest sites (not easy to find), each of which might struggle to get enough participation.

Use 7 day rather than 10 day nationals....

Variety in siting may be necessary to get contests hosted. If you want to place Nationals more frequently at awesome sites I won't complain, but the East Coast pilots might start to gripe about all the driving. ;-) 

Weather is too fickle and getting worse.

Wholesale change in american work ethic. mandatory 6 week paid vacation, return to 40 hour work weeks. universal basic income. white house invitations for national champions. prize purses. I would need more information on what you would consider a "nationals capable" site before answering yes to 11.4. If sites are selected properly we already basically have East/West nationals. Most people are flying 15/18, 18/20m2seat/Open & Standard/Club gliders. If these classes are not competing at the same site then almost every pilot has the choice to fly two nationals plus Sports. Speaking of how much longer are we going to drag out Sports Class? I think some thought needs to go into what is exactly the point of this class and is that goal being achieved. If not what changes to the class definition need to be made to achieve that goal. Are we costing participation in the 15 & 18m nationals? Just looking at the entry lists in the last three years it seems that might be the case. Why aren't Club Class & lower performance gliders showing up? They used to but not really, 2016 was the last year that something lower than an ASW-20 competed. shorten to 1 week.

suggest splitting nationals to east/west contests only for classes that have 40+ participants.

to me this is more of a logistic issue - if you know something is in the same place every year at the same time, you can plan and the place can also plan for the event. i.e. Sr's in FL This is a huge country - East and West similar events makes sense. as it sits now, from the outside view the SSA and Soaring contests business model is made for pilots who are retired or in contention to be Team members.
we flew two contest days in 2019 in which we laid a GP race on top of a traditional contest giving competitors two chances for points each day. we also offered prize money which heard no objections. if the money was big enough it could influence the participation.

14.2

In 2018 we encouraged Contest Managers to provide contestants their Pilot Kit via electronic means, cutting down on contest printing expenses. We asked that paper copies be provided to those pilots who wanted one. However, there are some items that pilots have said that they would like to have always printed. Please comment on what you would like to see still printed out in the contest packet for all pilots.

ALL PDF’s is the way to go.

Absolute #1 is a decent turnpoint map. The "Dart Maps" are really beautiful, great for planning and a lovely souvenir ... but a decent carry-it-in-the-cockpit paper turnpoint map becomes a necessity in many situations, particularly a MAT. Another annoying problem is that at many airports you cannot buy a sectional anymore. I still feel that it is safety & regulation mandatory to have a sectional in the cockpit, in the event that my flight computer quits (and it has) so I think it should be a requirement that they be available at the contest site.

Airport Map Local Frequencies Local Procedures Tie Down locations
All electronic is fine.
All electronic, eliminate paper
Can't think of anything
Complete race packet should be available in elect form and paper form
Complete race packet should be available in elect form and paper form
Contest area map with TPs should be paper. Same with airport maps. Everything else can be electronic.
Contest area map with turnpoints.
Contestant list with contact info. Field lay out with operating procedures.
Daily task sheet with task on a small map. Grid sheet.
Either works for me. Should be left up to the CM
Everything
Everything should be available in both formats.
Give me a break. 100% electronic and tell the luddites to grow up and get over it. The pilots can print the material at their leisure. Stop inconveniencing the poor CMs.
Grid Sheet Task Sheet List of Contestants
I can print anything I need.
I do not need anything printed from the Pilot Kit. I own a printer. :-)I think they should be available electronically but always provided as printed copies.
I would always like a waterproof wrinkle proof turnpoint map
I would like to have all the important stuff printed and handed to me please
I would like to see documents that a pilot might want to keep in the cockpit (e.g. a turnpoint list) always printed in the contest packet. I also think that contest organizers should consider cell service availability at their site before deciding whether to print Pilot Kits. Some sites (e.g. Newcastle) have limited cell service with some providers, making it difficult for some pilots to access their electronic Pilot Kit at the airfield.
I'm OK with the entire Pilot Kit being delivered entirely and exclusively via electronic means.
I'm fine with all electronic.
I'm happy with electronic communications. That way I can save them and refer to them electronically at any time on multiple platforms.
ID tags are nice.
Jim Darke's maps are awesome and welcome when available. At a minimum these should be printed. The rest of the docs can be electronic. The pilots will adapt.
Keep the rule for printed material as is.
Keep the rule for printed material as is.
Land out cards
Landing airfield notes. I would always like to have a paper copy of the prior day's scores.
Landout cards
Let the contest managers do this at their own discretion. Make paper copies available at the contest for those whose emails are incorrect or did not receive the pilot package.
List of all pilot AND CREW NAMES w/contact information. (Best after 1st day) Event/social schedule.
Local rules for traffic pattern and relight procedure.
Make available in PDF format on website and have pilots print what they need.
Maps
NOTHING!
Needs to be sent out two weeks in advance as those that have limited internet access will be prepared.
No comment -- I usually print the Pilot Kit before the contest anyway
No comment.
No need for any printed material..
No preference. Electronic seems reasonable.
None
None
None I can think of.
Nothing and there should be NO option to ask for print out, just print from electronic format at pilot own expense.
Nothing.
Printed materials should include a map of the contest area, key contact information (contest staff, local FAA/ATC numbers, etc), and critical procedures or safety concerns that are unique to the home airfield/environment.
Printed out on request by a pilot.
Printing on paper should not be mandatory. Leave it up to the discretion of the local contest organizer. The only minimum should be an updated (not a recycled version of last year's kit) electronic version of the pilot kit. Some details change year to year. At a regional that I participated in this year, 2019, the organizers used a 2017 pilot kit. If there really are no changes, then at least change the year on cover sheet to indicate that there have been no changes.
Procedures specific to the contest site (example: where you can and cannot drive on the ramp). Landing cards.
Provide printed copies on request.
Radio Frequencies for all airports in contest area plus pass D altitudes. Preferably in a note card for ready reference in cockpit
Social events/calendar. Pilot/crew name phone ID list.
Task Area Maps with Turnpoints Airfield Drawing and Traffic Pattern Recommendations
Task sheets.
The contest schedule
The daily task, grid sheet, and schedule for the week are actually sheets of paper I use. For the rest, electronic is fine. Figuring out a way to always make a colored, laminated area map with waypoints and airspace stuff available would be nice.
The only item I would like to see in paper form is the useful reduced-size excerpt from the sectional chart for the contest area. Having that in the cockpit is valuable. The rest can be sent my email. It presented on problem for me at contests this year to get the kit by email.
This is 2019, what are paper copies? ;-)
To reduce costs for organizers only electronic. If contestant wants printed do it themself or have a "printed packet fee.
Turn point lists or any map showing turnpoint layout of the task area.
Turn points and grid sheets
Turnpoint lists, especially disallowed and airport bonus available.
Turnpoint map
Turnpoint map, a decent one, not the stupid thing off the turnpoint exchange
Turnpoints
Why not let pilots who want anything on paper ask for the specific items they want? OTOH, I'd like to be able to get documents electronically without having to sign up for "social media". Email attachments and real web pages (not Facebook!) are OK.
a map of the task area site rules, eg entering the airport map
no comment
nothing
only those items we cant submit electronically.
• Contest Procedures * Airports that require additional descriptions for safety or are not allowed airport landing bonus • Parking/Airport diagrams

14.3
Comments on Contest Registration/Organization.
13.1 - Modify words of safety motor start to be 'anywhere' but "before the first Start'.
14.1: Clarify to add fee ONLY if paying electronically.
Add staff names to info. Section under Contest on website. May have to fill in blanks as spots fill during the pre-contest time period.

Allow our electronic registration to suffice rather than require paper. Allow electronic signatures.

Allow registration fees to be paid by bank transfer (organisers specify their data, as in IGC contests). Do not mandate just one platform, like PayPal.

Chuck Lohre at CCSC did a great job in 2019

Do away with sanction fee rebates for pilots who have been CD’s, CM’s, and Scorer’s. Too hard to determine who’s eligible and pilots often say they will pay anyway. Simplify the registration procedures, just do away with rebate.

Electronic means of payment should have been implemented long ago.

For my part -- I salute those willing to take on this job so the rest of us can enjoy the contest. I have found that most contest organizers, managers and CD’s work hard to provide efficient and safe events which are also fun. I hope this attitude continues well into the future.

Generally good.

God Bless our organizers!

I don't see any reason that PayPay fees cannot be absorbed in the sanction fee. Docusign is available at a deep discount to non-profits and should be used to streamline waiver signatures.

I would like to see a shift towards shorter pilot briefings. There is no reason to have every pilot briefing last 45-60 minutes, especially on a day when the day is canceled! I would also like to see task sheets handed out during pilot briefings (preferably before the weather briefing). This allows pilots to better understand weather and safety considerations for a task if these are discussed at the briefing.

IS PAY PAL MORE THAN THE COST OF A STAMP?

If a large penalty is possible during a specific task, the airspace, rule, or cause of that penalty should be given on the task sheet. Its clearly a lot of work to run a contest. I'm grateful to the people who undertake the task. Whatever the SSA can do to support this activity and help them would be valuable.

Just take credit cards during online registration- like the rest of the world!

Make it as easy and lean as you can.

No comment it all works well for me Thank you to all who work to put these events on!

No comment.

None

Require a 5-tow deposit at the closeout date. Non refundable. We need tow pilots and this woud insure that they will be paid for at least 5 tows

Shuffling and tracking paper copies of contest registration forms is one of the bigger pain-in-the-butt tasks for a CM (having served as one repeatedly over the last decade). I typically try to keep all copies of documents (such as pilot license images, insurance cover-sheets, etc) in an electronic format and only print them out when they need to be sent in to the SSA after the contest. If it was possible to handle all of this 100% online via the SSA / contest-management website that would be fantastic!

Thank god we still have managers and directors willing to take on these contests.

The SSA desperately needs a new website. The "Contest" section ought to have registration functions that allow pilots to make payment and change their registration status (i.e., aircraft, class, team status, crew, etc). The site should also allow racers and contest staff to blog, upload or embed videos or other content, link to social media, etc. The site needs to be designed by professionals who've had a chance to consult with younger (under 50) contest pilots, Juniors, and the SSA's GRC and digital media working group.

The SSA has the ability to process payments through the website. There is no additional fee to purchase merchandise or pay for membership through the SSA website. Why can't we process contest entries through the website instead of paying fees to PayPal?

The communication app "WhatsApp" should be highly encouraged but not required. Advertise to participants months in advance that it will be used at the contest. This gives participants time to acquire the app and learn how to use it. Pre-contest communications can be sent on WhatsApp as part of the testing and learning process. Continued in next block 15.1.....

There are other payment platforms (Zelle) that do not charge a fee. We should be using some of those.

We would all benefit from a consistent system that allows organizers to use text messages or similar technology to contact all pilots about meetings, tasks, etc. I've heard organizers say they do not have the expertise, and that it is a lot of work to copy all the phone numbers from applications into a list they can use from their phone. I suggest that SSA automate this for iPhone and Android so organizers don’t have to do this themselves.

What ever makes it easier on the Event organizers

Zelle would be a better electronic registration application. It's from bank account to bank account with no additional fee. It's easy to set up (minutes) and works with most banks. If not your bank, them use Ebay. Zelle is the way to go.
...continued from 14.3. Many contests have used WhatsApp successfully to distribute tasks, task updates, task related information, weather charts, weather updates and other contest information. It helps communicate changes, reminders and task sheets quickly, efficiently and accurately: better than verbal, faster than paper and in color. A cell connection can be used or wifi. Can be installed on tablets, notebook computers and desktops. Group participants can be easily added and removed. You can mute notifications.

1. Some CDs sometimes ask late launchers if they feel they got a fair start, and if not, hold up the task opening. This can make a big difference in contest outcomes. I am not advocating to allow or disallow this, but would like to see standardization on this procedure, both across contests and during a contest (e.g. is it fair for the CD to only ask the late launcher if they feel they have a fair start if the CD feels that pilot is a "contender" for winning or should all pilots get this opportunity? After you decide, please put the answer into the rules). 2. In addition to all the existing reasons for for cancelling a task, for safety reasons, tasks should never be opened if a CONVECTIVE SIGMET exists for any REQUIRED part of the task at the task start time. The AWC issues these for conditions "hazardous to all categories of aircraft". That includes gliders. This should not be a burden for the CD as they really should be checking for SIGMETs anyway, and it is easy to get a graphical representation of current convective SIGMETs on a phone or computer. Task advisors and the weatherman may have their current idea of a "safe task" colored by pressures such as having enough days for a valid contest, or even a chance to improve their own scores after a bad day, while the professional AWC forecasters have only safety in mind. My impression, having circled in poor lift while listening to task advisors trying to decide whether to cancel due to thunderstorms in the area, is that objective criteria for an outer limit would be a relief to many. 3. Task changes after take-off are a safety hazard. Heads down time to reprogram tasks, particularly with minutes or less till task start time (as currently allowed by 10.2.4.4), creates a collision hazard. Possible steps to mitigate this danger include: (a) Strongly discourage after-launch task changes (b) Strongly encourage CDs to have a system to use text messages or similar technology for task changes. I've seen this work at several contests. Copying changes from a text message is much easier than scribbling possibly misunderstood notes. (c) Disallow task changes (including task start time) within 10 minutes of task opening time. (d) Disallow task changes after take-off completely, like the FAI rules so many people want to adopt. But please do something for safety's sake.

10.2 So it's assumed we are transitioning to FAI rules, independent of pilot poll responses? 13.1 MG rules must ensure that MG pilots can't use engine test or re-launch as an excuse to: - Save themselves from an outrunning near home - Avoid the need to return near home if conditions are weak IOW, no pre-start tactical advantages than non-MG pilots don't have. 13.2 Rule specifies engine start within 3mi - does not impose penalty for "straying outside of the 3mi limit during an engine test".

Add a poll question next year seeking recommendations on how the sanction refund money should be used.

Add the Kestrel to the Club class list. It's stupid to exclude gliders in Club Class given the current US Club Class philosophy. It feels odd and arbitrary to include certain gliders and exclude others... if we want to be "pure" to the FAI list, then exclude the LS8s and Discus2s!!!!! The Kestrel participating gives me way less heartburn than Standard Class ships being able to make it around on days the low end of the handicap list have no chance to complete the task! But if you want to broaden the class to allow for greater participation (a very reasonable objective), then simply allow an entire handicap range to enter. Define this range from an ASW15, up through say the LS6 and just let anything in between participate. And let the poor Kestrel compete for crying out loud!

Adjust standard class handicaps to accommodate older standard class ships (cirrus, asw 19, libelle, dg100...) to encourage competitive competition for younger pilots. Right now, an ls4 or discus is the barrier to entry for standard class.

After seeing a rather dishartening argument on the field at a Nationals concerning who should be most responsive to incoming task finishes (the finishing pilot or the pilot in the pattern) I think the finish area needs to be placed where landing pilots can focus on the landing pattern without fear of being run over by a fast finishing glider who is not paying attention to the landing traffic. This could be at one end of the finish runway or even a short .5 mile distance from the landing field. It's ridiculous to have to be watching who's in the pattern while trying to keep aware of whose flying to the finish at red line. Lets face it, we are in general older than pilots in most other countries. We need some space!

Allow 10 gallons of water ballast for non motor gliders to even the wing loading advantage of motor gliders.

Allowing more forms of communications between pilots at Regionals, e.g., GliderLink.

As a CD and CM, as well as a regular contestant at National Championships, I urge the Rules Committee to keep a sense of perspective about what the mission of the SSA is, what the intent of the US Nationals are, and what serves the bulk of contest participants and volunteers the best - NOT just the top pilots who are fanatical about how they'd do at a WGC event.

Consider adding the California Grand Prix as an acceptable task for regional contests.

Consider adding the California Grand Prix as an acceptable task for regional contests.

Contest ID: in this day and age, it's the logger ID being correct and unique that's important. The actual tail letters don't matter. No more need to have a rule for changing tail lettering onsite. Those that show up with duplicate tail letters work it out ahead of time and radio calls are clearly done with the unique logger ID when needed. It's the logger that matters to your score. Please consider modifying the rule to get up to date with current technology and your own processes for flying at contests (valid logger file with unique ID's). Determine ways to encourage R12 to have a contest... please. Anything you can do will be a positive influence.

Currently 15, 18 and standard class are non handicapped. No water ballast contests are becoming more common. It is possible to have two or more pounds wingloading difference depending on the weight of the pilot and whether they carry an engine. In such instances, consider handicapping or weight capping to create a more level playing field in these "one of a kind" categories.

Discus 2, ASW-28, and LS-8 have a contest where they belong, and that is not in the club class. It is time to make the club class a true club class and let the high performance ships perform where they are designed to perform. If you cant fly a Discus 2B in the Club Class World Glider Championship, why are we allowed to qualify using one? The score sheet in Yoder would have looked dramatically different. Consider the 2019 Club Class Contest Day 2, where no glider finished unless it was an SZD-55 or better. It is time for the Discus 2's and LS-8's to go back to the Standard Class contests so that tasks can be properly called for the given performance range.

Don't change to FAI rules please. Only a very tiny fraction would benefit and the added danger and BS is not worth it to me, a mid level, goes to these things just for pure fun, type of guy. Thanks guys for working on this!! Fly Safe

Eliminate the rules pertaining to engine starts for a contest. Do not require them. (You didn't have that as an option on 13.3.) In 1.1, Open class was not an option, or I would have selected that one. I will send more in after being alerted to their importance by the experts on RAS.
Engine test run....... hmmm, looks like a weak day, 2 guys have landed back. Looks like a good time to test my engine. Put-put, put-put, put, put-put, wonder if there’s lift under that Cu over there? Put-put, put-put, put-put, YES there is! Engine test run complete! I have seen them driving around under partial power, looking for a good thermal.

Engine test. How is this different from a self-relight? You’re allowed to “relight” which is a climb to tow altitude. I didn’t look, I think we got rid of the limitation on number of relights, which is the only reason to treat a relight different from an engine test. So, unite engine tests and relights: start your engine any time you want within 3 miles of the airport or within the start cylinder, climb to no more than tow release + 500′, and you can’t start for 15 (or was it 20) minutes. PS, talk to motor pilots. Now that I have a motor I see all the worrying about this stuff on the ground over the winter by non motor pilots is really misplaced energy. I flew Truckee and did the regional handicapped Grand Prix. This is excellent. We will forward a separate proposal to allow this in regionals. There are two parts: bring back the “last start time” option, and allow turn area tasks with glider-specific legs. Each is independent.

Getting rid of the block font requirement is fine, but contest numbers should be readable. I do not have block font, but I have asked multiple people and they can clearly read my number. There are however some high ranking pilots that have block, but in light grey that is not readable at any distance. This should be corrected.

Have more influence on the site selection process so all the work on FAI rules isn’t wasted.

I already forwarded a proposal to address a problem we faced at Caesar Creek: i.e., in Standard Class, we had an official contest with 8 contestants, all of whom had at least 40% of the winner’s score after 4 days. But we faced the possibility that by continuing to fly, we might lose that official status if one pilot dropped below 40%. That seemed assured when he suffered damage and had to drop out. Fortunately (?), the last two days were weathered out. My proposal says, in essence, that once you hit the magic numbers for an official contest, you can’t lose it. There should not be a disincentive to keep flying and competing if we’ve already satisfied the rules designed to prevent “phantom” entries just to fill out the field. I hope this will receive consideration. It’s difficult enough to get enough pilots together for a nationals in some classes at some sites without having to worry about a contest meeting the minimum requirements and then backtracking after being there a week or so.

I am looking forward to flying US contests under FAI rules!

I think an option to fit national contests from weekend to weekend should be allowed (including travel/practice). It’s hard to take 2 weeks of work given the limited vacation times these days. I see to much of a “retired” majority of folks at nationals. We need to figure out how to encourage younger in their career pilots to attend contests.

I think motor gliders have an inherent advantage. No bonus should be given for an airport landing unless the glider lands without starting the engine.

I think the move to FAI rules is nuts. But it also appears that boat has sailed. I hope the Rules committee will holdout against the effort to dilute the low finish rule.

I want to thank the Rules Committee for all the work they put into making US contests safe, fun, and fair.

I would like to see the Open Cirrus and Kestrel and other early 17-Meter single-place ships get added to the list of Club Class ships. Phil Chidekel’s comments this summer re: the list of ships approved for Club Class were spot on and it’s a shame people fly these ships have no class they can compete to make the US Team. I would also like to see the SSA adopt a CD training program where applicants can apply to be an Assistant CD at a regional or national contest. Assistant CM’s could assist CM’s with their duties as well, before, during, and after a contest. MAT tasks are dangerous and should be eliminated from the rules. Moreover, they are not racing. AT and TAT should be equally assigned with TAT being reserved for days where conditions are less certain, or for regional contests where the field of competition in sports or club class includes a number of beginners.

If pilot communications air to air and ground to air becomes common, then more needs to be defined on use of communications using VHF 123.3. Examples of issues: 1) If pilot to pilot communications is allowed on 123.3... let CD determine excessive use?... or prohibit it 2) All communications air-air, ground-air must be outside VHF 123.3 3) Leave all air-air and ground-air communications to be determined by pilot/team using it using legal FCC channels or commercial services.

If standard and 15m are combined we need much more sophisticated handicapping.

If the US is going to try FAI rules for a year, perhaps some other countries could try US rules for a year?

Increasing participation. It seems to me that the number of contest entrants has been stagnant for the past 5 to 10 years. Thanks to the rules committee members past and present for their time and effort.

Keep up the good work, and thanks for all you do!

Like it or not there is a psychological/tactical advantage to having an FES or a motor in a glider. A glider pilot with a motor has a significant advantage when it comes to flying low over tiger country or low and just below final glide to a turn point or a finish over a pilot with a conventional glider. The risk is just too high. The glider pilot with the motor will extend his glide toward his goal knowing that once he descends to a certain altitude he can fire up the motor and fly home. This is a considerable advantage over a glider pilot without a motor. I think the rules committee must start to explore was making a more level playing field between motorized and conventional buyers.

Move to FAI smoothly. No reason to have multiple rule sets. All adjustments can be made through local procedures. Combine Standard and 15 Meter with handicaps for a larger FAI class. Allow single seaters that fall inside the handicap range of club class to fly Club class even if they have longer wingspans (ex. Kestrel 17, Open Cirrus). FAI Club Class does allow spans greater than 15 meter such as the Cirrus B with 16 meter wingspan.

No motor gliders in club class.

FLARM is a mess. No discussion at contests of how it to be set up or even if it has to be always on. Installation matters. Knowledge about FLARM system is very low and no place to gain knowledge. At contests FLARM use is like the sheep grazing with the wolves

No other suggestions see comments above

No running/testing of any sailplane motors, engine, FES, or devices that propels the sailplane in a forward manner while sailplane is on or near the grid to create blowing debris, scare, or aggravate anyone. Testing elsewhere requires the pilot to have a safety person present to alert others as to the engine run and to assure others are not harmed or sailplanes blasted my the prop wash. The CD must cover this during the mandatory meeting. FP has been warned multiple times and seems to have a psychotic affliction to scaring people and blasting dirt on the grid. R
Once again, please consider my comments about eliminating the span restriction on club class gliders. There's no reason to limit contest participation when the sport is declining.

Participation. Youth recruiting/juniors. Hybrid XC camps with racing.

Please engage with IGC regarding our rule differences that enhance safety. If we can show that we are statistically safer, perhaps we can get them to move our way on some things.

Q 1.8, 1.9, 1.10 since I am not from the US, I have not been involved in SSA/US contest organization, however, I have organized and been Contest Manager for many contests at home.

Ref 10.x 1. Edit current rule to replace 'should' with 'shall' most locations. Only a suggestion as written. 2. Create within rule a waiver process for legible but otherwise non-conforming markings. Waiver application must include photo taken at not less than 2 wingspans. Legibility to be determined by 2 sec flash card type viewing of photo by multiple persons NOT previously exposed to applicant markings. 3. Waiver may be permanent to current owner but not transferable, carried in ship. 4. CD may only allow over-marking of non-conforming marking, NOT acceptance of existing as is markings. Instant CD acceptance only perpetuates illegal markings. 10.2: At no time should a ship without under-wing markings or with mis-matched markings be allowed to compete. Questions in 10.x as written will only result in a tabulation of those with or without conforming markings. It is felt that these questions only give lip service to a safety issue that needs to be taken seriously and corrected.

Remove the ability to start out the back of the cylinder.

Rule 3.2.2 Should include - "Pilots or pilots whose spouse has served as..." ie - a person planning to score has a spouse unable to get into a regional competition due to low ranking may lead to person planning to score not doing so. It is hard to get people to commit to being CM, CD or scorer - let's not jeopardize losing these people.

Rule 5.7.3.4 essentially requires the use of the DRY handicap list for BALLAST-ALLOWED competitions. This leads to many anomalies, for example a heavy pilot in an unmotorized glider and a light pilot in the motorized version of the same glider, who would have the SAME take-off dry weight and the SAME ballasting ability and the SAME all-Up ballasted weight in aerodynamically IDENTICAL gliders, to be assigned very different handicaps. After discussing the issue with several pilots, it seems like the root cause is that THE US IS THE ONLY MAJOR SOARING COUNTRY THAT DOES NOT HAVE A PROPERLY CALCULATED HANDICAP LIST FOR COMPETITIONS WHERE WATER BALLAST ARE ALLOWED. All the handicap lists we know of, such as the BGA list, the German DAEc list, the French Index Planes list, the Italian list, etc., all list handicaps calculated based on ballasting ability. Australia has two lists (with and without ballast), and so does the latest revised Czech list (with all the motorgliders with retractable engines and all the FES variants included). With the increasing popularity and use of combined FAI classes, where ballast is allowed, the US SSA/RC should consider generating a handicap list that is properly calculated to take into account ballast ability.

Task sheets must be printed with the diagram and weather and retrieve instructions on the first page. Maximum of two tasks. Ie primary and backup. Bailout task would be a time reduction of a TAT. No new task in the air. VERY DANGEROUS!!!

Thanks for all the hard work and everything you do to keep racing alive in the US!

Thanks you for moving forward with the clear mandate from 2018 to use FAI rules. Do not let the Nixon and Good (and others) interfere with the progress. That mindset has set us back twenty years in competitive learning.

The Kestrel 17 must be added back to the Club Class list!

The club class definition is somewhat confused. I believe it is at once too broad and too restrictive. I am sympathetic to the desire to provide a definition which increases the cross-section of pilots and aircraft that participate, but if this is the objective then simply allowing any sailplane within a defined handicap range (without regard to wingspan) to participate seems like the consistent choice. I see no rationale for permitting Discus 2s to participate but not open cirri, kestrels, dg202s, etc. Limiting club class to a specific list of aircraft to allow assigned tasking and keep the gliders more together is also a reasonable approach, but in this case we should simply use the FAI list. Creating an arbitrary U.S. club class list which is in between makes no sense to me, either let in any glider with a handicap between 0.898 and 1.02 or else restrict participation to the FAI list.

The issue of having the lowest score at 40% of the winner is difficult when combined with the minimum requirements (8 minimum and/or 5 greater than 92%). Reduce the minimum score to 20% and maybe change wording to (equal to or greater than 92%).

The major issue is whether the rules should continue to be strongly biased in favor of participation for average entrants or evolved to provide a definition which increases the cross-section of pilots and aircraft that participate, but if this is the objective then simply allowing any sailplane within a defined handicap range (without regard to wingspan) to participate seems like the consistent choice. I see no rationale for permitting Discus 2s to participate but not open cirri, kestrels, dg202s, etc. Limiting club class to a specific list of aircraft to allow assigned tasking and keep the gliders more together is also a reasonable approach, but in this case we should simply use the FAI list. Creating an arbitrary U.S. club class list which is in between makes no sense to me, either let in any glider with a handicap between 0.898 and 1.02 or else restrict participation to the FAI list.

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The issue of having the lowest score at 40% of the winner is difficult when combined with the minimum requirements (8 minimum and/or 5 greater than 92%). Reduce the minimum score to 20% and maybe change wording to (equal to or greater than 92%). Maybe add provision for contestants that have to leave. The major issue is whether the rules should continue to be strongly biased in favor of participation for average entrants or evolved to try to emulate the WGC for competitive reasons. They are in conflict in many areas.

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Very concerned that motor gliders and pure sailplanes are being bunched up to have the same rules. They are two different types of flying. If you land out in a glider and you get a 5 hour retrieve, you are now tired for the next day of flying. The pilot that starts his engine and now gets bonus points to fly home is back and relaxed for flying.

right now we have 500-ish pilots ranked - we need more pilots ranked which should help contest participation. We need a way to get pilots trying to get ranked who can only fly as a hobby on weekends. Many working younger pilots with families become disconnected form the sport. Many pilots who do not fly contest become disconnected from the Contest pilots. We need innovation in how we do contests and how we give a pilot a rank to keep them engaged.

Responses for each text type.
Return to the 2019 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll survey form to check your input.

Return to main survey page.

If you have problems or questions contact the survey administrator.
2.7 Comment on the Flarm rental program:

A few cases of bad behavior by renters have been a big burden. It's not easy to get good antenna performance from a quickie install.

A good idea. Flarm at a contest primarily using Thermals is on as important as a contest with ridge tasking.

As someone who has used this program on multiple occasions, it is a tremendous asset to the soaring community. I would support adding a fee to contest expenses to support administration of this program. Everyone benefits from more widespread FLARM use.

Core units should be available? Easier swap if/when someone's unit is faulty... possibly.

EASY

Flarm is as much distraction as benefit

Flarm units should be available for rent. Perfect way to address those situations where a pilot can not afford a unit or is trying a contest for the first time and does not want to invest in the early stage of his contest career.

God Bless Williams Soaring for keeping it going. Particularly for Club Class & Junior competitors it has made national level competition possible for more people.

Great option for Sports/Club Class.

Great! Thanks Rex and Noelle!

I decided to buy one after renting one.

I found the portable Powerflarm to be very disappointing.

I look forward to renting a flarm for the glider I plan to fly at Club Class Nationals next year and at 2021 20M Nationals. I think its a bit silly that Nationals require the use of Flarm when some of the Regionals are more heavily attended then some of the nationals. Maybe the criteria for Flarm should be based on the size of the contest not whether its a Nats or Regionals.

I normally do not fly with a FLARM since only 1 other pilot in our area flies with FLARM. I flew the 2019 Club Class National, where the IGC file submission was more restrictive; I needed a "valid" IGC file rather than one I normally submit at regional competitions coming from my FlyWithCE logger. Williams was very timely in sending me a rentable portable FLARM. Qudos, and a highly recommended service. The issue I had with this arrangement was that (since I am not familiar with FLARM configuration), I had no idea that I needed to set up a FLARM config file, Fortunately, I had help getting a config file created and uploaded. It would have been extremely helpful if some "how to" information was provided to renters, and I had to time to test it to make certain the logger was recording properly (for me it was NOT) and a big fat ZERO ensued.

I rented a Flarm when the rental program first started and it was great.

I've always owned a flarm, I sold my portable to Williams Soaring for rental.

I've rented a Flarm twice, and while it formally "worked" I considered it a waste of time, a distraction in the cockpit, and no help or improvement in safety. In part these problems come from the fact that the rental flarms give you none of the advantages that a well-installed and configured flarm can give you ... and all of the distractions and the miseries. Our cockpits are already too full of beeping widgets, and I am concerned as a CFI that these flarms are turning ever more of our contest pilots into pseudo-IFR pilots, it's all on the panel, and what's going on out there be damned.

I've used rental program twice before acquiring my own PowerFLARM and it worked flawlessly.

If mandatory FLARM, then rental should be available.

Intended to rent from Rex & Noelle but found a loaner from a friend—that I subsequently purchased.

It was awesome. Williams sent me a rental unit for 2 different contests before I bit the bullet and bought one for myself. It was a fair price and made Flarm usage affordable for all classes.

It worked the one time I rented. That experience was good enough to convince me to purchase the Brick.

It worked well.

It's been years since I did, but William's Soaring made it easy.

Like the program, but not sure it is available any more. Could be a resolution to provide a rental flarm to contests for possible failed flarms.

Needs to continue.
No comment other than if there are enough units available then it should be required until all are rented.

None

Not applicable -- have a FLARM core

Not sure of its status

Rented a FLARM the first year they were available. It worked well and helped make the decision to invest in FLARM

Rex and Noelle Mayes have provided a wonderful Flarm Rental service which barely breaks even. The original plan was to provide a bridge until Flarm had matured as a technology which was 5+ years ago since it's introduction. Flarm has matured with many options available from different providers. I believe, Rex and Noelle are planning to exit the Flarm Rental service.

The Flarm rental program is great. I have used it for several years. My home club has very few XC pilots so I thought there was no need to install a flarm permanently in both of my gliders unless I was in a contest. After using it I have now installed one in my new glider together with ads b in and out. The rental program is a great stepping stone for those not convinced of it's value.

The rental portable flarm units have many problems and rarely fit in most gliders.

The rental unit would not fit easily in my LS8 a few years ago.

The rental unit would not fit easily in my LS8 a few years ago.

The unit did operate successfully.

This program needs to be robust if FLARM is to be required.

Very glad it has been in place. Obviously, Nephi was an early adopter of mandatory FLARM and without this rental program, many dozens of pilots would not have participated in our events over the last 6 years.

Was OK because Williams did/does a very good job. However, the rule was whoever had "not" used a FLARM before got priority over a pilot who had rented one before if the number of rental units was not enough to serve all that desired a rental FLARM.

When Flarm first came out I rented one from Williams I think It was easy and cheap

Worked for me.

Worked great--it was a very long time ago.

Worked well.

Worked well. Easy to get easy to return

Worked well. I bought the one I rented.

If you make a contest with mandatory flarm/ you must supply rental units

2.9

: Comment on allowing the use of Flarm Stealth mode:

Causes more head down time in the cockpit.

Don't fool with the stealth mode Requires creating a new config file is a pain in the ass

Flarm is a minor component in winning contests. It is a pain to switch back and forth between modes - but if a pilot is paranoid they should have the option of having it set for pure collision avoidance. ps - no one follows me :) Flarm promotes leaching that interferes with measurement of pilot skill, the point of a contest

Flarm usage with full capability continues to detract from the contest experience. It allows those with lesser ability place higher than they would otherwise be able to. It removes the reward for taking a sporting risk thus leading to a less fulfilling experience. Using stealth mode at all contests would be one way of having the safety benefits of FLARM without lessening the contest experience. Unfortunately, there has to be a way to counter those who would cheat and find a way around the stealth feature. For better situational awareness I'd prefer Stealth mode was not used.

H

Haven't tried stealth mode yet. Possibly a trial run at Nationals is in order. Regionals should stay at full info being displayed to allow the fun factor to be maintained.

I believe the manufacturer states that it reduces alerts and recommends against it. If that is correct, ie that stealth mode reduces safety, it would be unwise from a potential liability point of view for SSA or the contest organizers to permit the stealth mode.

I could see legal implications were flarm stealth to be used and an accident that could be blamed on that.

I don't have enough direct experience with the current implementation of Stealth Mode to comment. If collision detection range is unaffected, then it could be useful. We should look to Europe for guidance on this option.

I don't like the idea of electronic leaching but I think that once installed and working properly, the device should be allowed to send the full packet of information. There could be a situation where the climb rate and/or ID of another competitor helps provide a pilot with safety information -- such as finding a thermal to avoid a dangerous landout. You could argue that the pilot should never get into a situation where finding such a thermal is needed, but we all know what sometimes happens.

I don't see that stealth mode can be made to work if the pilot is willing to work at it. Given that I don't see an alternative except just let it be used. If made stealth mode mandatory and made it unsportsmanlike conduct for trying to defeat it, them maybe.

I flew the 2015 Std. Nats in Elmira where stealth was mandated. It worked fine to improve safety. The tactical advantage of FLARM that was dismissed by those who argued against mandatory stealth mode (which I supported) is now an indisputable fact.
As I understand it, mandatory stealth mode is a non-starter from a legal liability perspective so I'm not sure why this answer is even among the choices.

I have mixed feelings - IDs are good for team flying and WGC practice. I prefer a level playing field. That means Stealth mode either mandatory or forbidden. I also like flying to be a direct experience with the weather and experience, not one based on gizmos and looking into the cockpit a lot. Hence mandatory stealth mode.

I strongly dislike use of flarm for tactical leeching but stealth mode results in targets not shown until too close. Safety is enhance by seeing targets further away than Stealth shows. A "Competition Mode" should be available which maintains full distance detection/display but removes contest ID and climb rate. This would be a good compromise.

I turned Stealth mode on during a practice day to fully understand how it would work tactically. As expected, other pilots could not see my climb rates/ID, however the it also affected my own usage. I could no longer see other gliders ID/climb rates and couldn't see traffic at all until very close (<1 mile). So, the tactical advantage gained by turning it on, also gave me a tactical disadvantage since I could no longer see anyone else. I think if you left it pilot option, you'd find very few using stealth once they realize the impacts.

I would like to see pilots making their own decisions on a task and not use flarm position of other competitors to leach. I would like to see pilots making their own decisions on a task and not use flarm position of other competitors to leach. I prefer stealth mode not be used, especially at the regional level. I do understand why contestants want it. I am not one that wants to use it.

I'm personally too busy flying to make much use of Flarm in a tactical sense. However, I understand how others object to this information being available.

If allowed at pilot's option then those who worry they'll be "leached" on can use that mode. Those who want to cooperate with a team/partner can use FLARM to "see" each other better, some may think that's cheating but it's not conceptually different from using eyeballs, just easier. In regional contests communications is allowed anyway, and I think the allowed forms of communications should be widened. (The communications ban is not enforceable anyway.)

If/where Flarm is required please prohibit stealth mode.

Is not needed, leave it up to pilots

It does not reduce safety in a meaningful way. It should be a safety device and not a leach tool.

It was used in 2015 at Elmira to no ill effects. How it would work at a western location with higher closing speeds, I don't know.

Knowing who I will be flying close to is an important addition to evaluating safety.

Let the pilot determine his level of risk

Many collision situations developed for me, even in Flarm mandatory nationals. A few situations occurred where I was completely unaware of a glider that came within 150 meters and there was no indication at all. Several different gliders on several days. Likely stealth mode problems. And no collision warning whatsoever in one occurrence when less than 100 meters away. Essentially zero situational awareness for either pilot when we were both required to carry a 2k anti collision instrument. I found this unacceptable, and unnerving, as I later learned one pilot had chose to turn the Flarm off and was NOT PENALIZED. Without enforcement such rules are poor at best. If Flarm is mandatory then the igc file from the Flarm SHOULD BE the primary file required with a warning for failure and DSQ for second offense. This limits the guys who turn off the Flars at key moments, etc. See if Flarm can limit the range to 3 miles or something to satisfy the anti tech folks. Safety is currently compromised in the US without solid enforcement with teeth.

Minimize eyes in cockpit looking at electronic screens.

Needs to be all or none.

No experience with it one way or another so no opinion

No problem with it as soon as position, altitude and heading is provided.

Non-stealth-mode information is of minimal value in terms of overall racing strategy. The odds that using this information to one's advantage (once or perhaps twice over an entire contest week) actually will make a notable difference at the top of the scoresheet is minuscule. There are random factors in soaring - such as the location and timing of a thermal on an Assigned Task - which can play a much bigger role. For years people have been flying without stealth mode at contests I've been to and I've never heard of someone making a big move on the scoresheet as a result. Can we please put this issue to bed?

Pilot option

Pilot option so long as in stealth mode, the pilot opting out is not to see any information on pilots who choose to participate. Progress sometimes creates problems! Can't believe the potential liability doesn't stop us from considering how to reduce the workings of the device.

Seeing another glider's climb rate remotely is obviously a helpful signal to a soaring pilot. Is this good or bad for competition? I do not know the answer to this question. There are good reasons for each choice. I think a big discussion should be hosted on-line with people giving their reasons for each view. Then a vote should be taken among comp pilots.

Should be up to the pilot

Something is always better than nothing when it comes to collision avoidance so it's difficult to be negative about FLARM. However, the perceived purpose of FLARM has long been superseded by it's use as a tactical device. At the World Gliding Championships in Australia there two mid-air collisions. FLARM was mandatory. At least one well known international pilot had six electronic displays in his cockpit, primarily for the purpose of following the best pilots. FLARM ID's were being changed in-flight. At least at the world level, FLARM is primarily a tactical device. I know that certain countries have proposed rules to the FAI that would reduce or eliminate the value of FLARM as a tactical device. If you are going to make it mandatory you need to adopt these practices.
Stealth degrades flarm
Stealth mode also significantly decreases range of warnings. Reduced warning range reduces EVERYBODY's safety.
Stealth mode would negate much of the benefits of the Flarm. If Stealth mode is permitted, why require Flarm at all? To use Flarm to track a competitor would require devoting a lot of attention to tracking and following. If you are doing that, you are not paying attention to thermalling and flying the course, and hence more likely to land out.
Stealth should be all or none
Sure, let them use stealth.
Tactical use of Flarm adds an additional level of strategic complexity that I like.
The Flarm manufacturer recommends against it because it reduces efficacy of the device as a collision avoidance mechanism. That is reason enough to forbid it.
The SSA previously took a position after obtaining legal advice that it would have no official position re use or prohibition of stealth mode.
The primary use of Flarm is situational awareness, this use is more important and contributes more to safety than the alarms themselves. Stealth mode minimizes or eliminates its usefulness as a situational awareness tool.
The rules for Flarm should mirror the IGC policies to best prepare pilots to fly in the Worlds. Right now this information is Pilot Option.
There should not be any rule pertaining to Flarm. Completely optional. Flarm is fraught with ongoing problems. ADSB use will eliminate flarm.
This is how the IGC will mandate its use in the future.
Tricky...
Unless Flarm Stealth mode provides EXACTLY the same anti-collision features, it should not be an option to use it until it does. Regardless of what the FAI is doing!
Use of Stealth mode must NEVER be restricted or forbidden.
Use of Stealth should be different between World, National and Regional competitions. In Regional comps it should not be allowed.
Very common to hear the winner say, "I saw them on FLARM" when making some tactical decision. FLARM is a competitive game changer. On the other hand its is fun to see who is where doing what on course. Most competitors are not trying to win but having a good time and FLARM in NON-STEALTH supports this.
Without Stealth Mode Flarm makes racing a video game. With Stealth Mode, we gain back at least some of the individual spirit of the sport. Make Flarm about safety, not digitally enhanced leeching.
the downside of stealth mode is that it makes it difficult to know if the system is working properly or not. In open mode, we'll see each other at considerable distance, this is reassuring.

2.10

Comment on requiring the use of Flarm:

ADSB out requirements will soon make moot this discussion, or at least the tactical objections.
Actually I think it's good and bad. FLARM I believe does create a bit safer flying environment, BUT it does promote keeping your head in the cockpit. And, I think we've found that some pilots think since they have FLARM, they don't have to keep visual vigilance like not having it. WE need to treat FLARM like while it's useful, it is not always reliable and nothing is better than visual attentiveness.
All we hear from the racing committee is their main concern is safety when it comes to the rules, but then they don't require FlARM. I think the committee is a group of hypocrites.
Any contest with more than 15 gliders ought to make Flarm mandatory. The one concern is Club Class which is our cheap entry class. Therefore the current policy makes the most sense except we ought to relax the requirement for Club Nats, I'm less sure about Sports Class, which has few Club Class entrants in my experience.
Do not ever require Flarm. Flarm should be eliminated. If we are serious about midair avoidance the SSA should halt their opposition to transponder use, and should make transponder and ADSB out mandatory, same as for powered craft.
FLARM is a critical safety technology.
FLARM is a good addition to pilot awareness during contests. It should be mandatory
FLARM is a tremendous safety innovation and its use should continue to be strongly encouraged. Keep it simple for people to equip and use it (i.e. don't make them worry about Stealth Mode or other settings purely for contests), and you have a higher likelihood of people equipping it and using it (both in casual XC flying and in contests). At large events and/or where there are airspace or terrain restrictions that bring lots of aircraft into close proximity, FLARM should be considered mandatory.
FLaRm makes team flying much easier but the tactical info is open
Flarm has helped me avoid conflict in a number of instances. I think it is a positive addition to collision avoidance. Silver bullet? Of course not, but on balance I am for continued use and promotion.
Flarm in contests is extremely important - and should be available if possible. As well as trackers. Pilots are not allowed to communicate with crew, so best for the sport to know where every one is and the pilots to know they will not swap paint with anyone.
Flarm is a barrier to entry for some and I don't believe it should be required to fly a contest.

Flarm radar is one of the biggest threats to our sport, especially if info can come from the ground back to the cockpit.

Flarm should be mandatory for National contests and at regionals where there are enough participants to make it necessary say 20 pilots.

Flarm should be required in all competitions

Flarm should not be required in any SSA sanctioned contests.

Flarm usage with full capability continues to detract from the contest experience. It allows those with lesser ability place higher than they would otherwise be able to. It removes the reward for taking a sporting risk thus leading to a less fulfilling experience.

For safety sake. Though a better range would be much nicer. Some of my Flarm warnings also seem to get stuck on the Oudie, so a flawless operation would be nice.

I am not in favor of mandatory Flarm. I want pilots to be observing outside the cockpit. See and avoid

I am not in favor of mandatory Flarm. I want pilots to be observing outside the cockpit. See and avoid

I believe, it's a good thing. Contest Management should continue to be able to determine if it is or is not required for their contest.

If you want to continue to have a Flarm Rental program, I believe, you need to find someone else to run the program.

I do not think Flarm should be a requirement to compete in any class.

I don't like blanket mandates. However, Flarm can enhance safety. It should be up to contest management to decide on whether the situation warrants a Flarm mandate.

I don't like how much it's changed the sport and the leeching, however it's here to stay and the safety benefits are undeniable. So, I'm in support of mandating for all contests.

I don't really have a problem with requiring the use of Flarm in nationals, but at the same time I didn't find it particularly useful during the club nationals this year.

I just like to see position, altitude and heading for safety reason all the rest is not important to me

I like required Flarm use, but believe there are situations and contestants that this would be an additional burden that might prevent them from otherwise flying the contest.

I think the CD should be able to provide waivers to individual contestants. As far as proving a Flarm is working at the national level I think a few random checks of contestants should be done and additional checks may be requested by the CD.

I see little advantage to this, having flown in large gaggles many times. If gliders are close enough to crash the last place you should be looking is at an instrument screen in the cockpit.

I should be required. It is relatively inexpensive and the safety value is significant.

I think it is a good thing. But Sports Class is the "low cost, entry level" contest. Perhaps require at Nationals only.

I think it is difficult to require Flarm in all contests without a robust Flarm rental program as a complement. It doesn't make sense to mandate that $12k gliders install a $2.5k Flarm unit so that they can fly contests. Regardless, I would like to see 100% Flarm adoption, in large part because analysis of Flarm logs can be used to locate missing gliders in the event of an overdue pilot or accident.

I'm getting less and less interested in flying contests the more they become a very expensive video game. The "tactical" use of flarm distresses me, but even more it's apparent that all the widgets in the cockpit mean that most of the pilots simply aren't really looking where they are going. The Flarm becomes "I need a Flarm to protect myself from you ... because you have a Flarm, you don't look where you are going anymore."

I'm not generally in favor of mandating more cost but I make an exception here. It works. It looks like it will be around for a while. So make it mandatory. I'm still using a Portable Flarm, which works great, that I installed in my glider the first time in a few minutes.

I've found Flarm to be an essential part of situational awareness and believe strongly it should be required for SSA sanctioned events.

I'm in favor of requiring use at nationals and in the future moving down to regionals.

In its day, until ads-b, Flarm maybe had a place. at this point, ads-b out is the national airspace standard and should be where the glider community is going, not the continued use of Flarm. ads-b at this point costs about the same as Flarm. add a small additional cost for ads-b in and you do not need Flarm. I have ads-b out and in.

It has saved my bacon a few times. Glad it is here and hope it only grows and is here to stay.

It is a great safety item

It is amazing the number of pilots that don't register their contest number. This is kind of a secret stealth mode. If Flarm failure becomes a reason to get ejected from a contest this will lead to pilots owning a backup device. Going to contests is too expensive to get thrown out. Also, we don't throw folks out if they have a radio failure....

It should be mandatory at the Nationals level. Rentals shouldn't be necessary with the availability of Flarm Mice at a reasonable price. PowerFlarms being mandatory is a different subject - they are better as a pilot selected option.

It should be required for collision avoidance, not to enable tactical or leeching decisions.

It's a brave new world.

It's not perfect but it's much, much better than nothing and not a high barrier for contest pilots.

It's too expensive to require at the regional/club class level.

Makes sense to me! We require parachutes!
Nationals - yes. Regionals - up to contest director.

No brainer

On balance it is a help for safety, but if I find a thermal it sure causes a bunch of big, white plastic friends.

Peer pressure is probably a better approach than mandating for contests which attract pilots operating on a smaller budget. An alternative is for rental units to be made available free of charge if needed with the rental fee covered by the SSA's Surplus Sanction Fee funds. This might be offered on a trial basis at a few contests to see if it makes a difference.

Regarding the idea of removing a pilot from competition because of Flarm failures: This would be very unfair. I've had Flarm failures at two contests. In both cases I was lucky to be flying with experienced troubleshooters, who dedicated a lot of time to the problems, but in both cases we wound up flying multiple days with no Flarm before it was fixed. This is with access to a spare unit. No clear error messages are issued by Flarm. The Flarm log file is a joke: no one in the USA can look at a Flarm log file and tell you what is wrong, including the USA Flarm dealers and the even the developer who got it certified in the USA. Flarm is great when it works but very hard to debug when something goes wrong.

Required at all SSA sanctioned contests but stealth mode is at pilot's discretion.

Required in all sanctioned contests. It has proven to have avoided many collisions at Nationals

See above. Many collision situations developed for me, even in Flarm mandatory nationals. A few situations occurred where I was completely unaware of a glider that came within 150 meters and there was no indication at all. Several different gliders on several days. Likely stealth mode problems. And no collision warning whatsoever in one occurrence when less than 100 meters away. Essentially zero situational awareness for either pilot when we were both required to carry a 2k anti collision instrument. I found this unacceptable, and unnerving, as I later learned one pilot had chose to turn the Flarm off and was NOT PENALIZED. Without enforcement such rules are poor at best. If Flarm is mandatory then the igc file from the Flarm SHOULD BE the primary file required with a warning for failure and DSQ for second offense. This limits the guys who turn off the Flarms at key moments, etc. See if Flarm can limit the range to 3 miles or something to satisfy the anti tech folks. Safety is currently compromised in the US without solid enforcement with teeth.

Should be mandatory, works great- really adds to safety

Should be required until a better solution is available

Use of Flarm should NEVER be mandatory in ANY contest.

Where flarm is required, hopefully all contests, there should be an on-site rental program to backup any flarm unit which goes unopened during the contest. 2 or 3 spares on hand.

With the existence of head lights on car, would anyone consider not requiring racing cars to have their lights on at night on the interstate or a racing track? The situation with Flarm is analogous. With now very high adoption rates, and the proven safety-enhancing record of Flarm, why would anyone consider not requiring it on glider races, aprticularly on AST where all gliders remain in near proximity during the entire task and taking (likely the same) thermals? Would be completely OK to eliminate Flarm in contest of < 20 contestants

Yes at Nationals - No at regionals and low performance contests

You have decided to make it required in Nationals. So don't make it optional. Similar to parachutes...each pilot must use it each day.

3.1a

List tracking equipment if selected Other above.

ADS-B
ADS-B out
ADS-B-OUT can be used for live tracking as well via FlightAware. The tracking is even more live than SPOT if the aircraft is in range of a ground based antenna.
APRS
FLARM OGN
FLARM can be used for tracking, although that is not commonly done in the USA.
Home designed aprs system utilizing amateur radio repeaters
Home designed aprs system utilizing amateur radio repeaters
I carry a PLB
IGC DROID
IGC Droid
InReach
InReach SE
Spot
transponder. Can't forget that they can help with tracking as well in emergency situations.

4.2a
Specify the type of artificial horizon if answered yes to the above.

Air Avionics (Butterfly vario)
Air Avionics Air Glide S
Air Vario
Air glide
Air-Avionics Display S, ISU
Air-glide vario
AirGlide
Butterfly
Butterfly - currently permanently locked out
Butterfly Vario
Butterfly, Dynon D2 and Stratus 2 wifi to iPhone or iPad
CELL PHONE APP
Cell Phone based
I have NOT purchased the software upgrade for my LX9000.
I have an ancient T&B gyro - not software.
LX
LX
LX
LX 9000
LX 9070 LX V8 AirGlide S
LX 9070 AHRS
LX Nav
LX9000 with AHRS enabled on my new glider.
LX9000, MGL
LX9070
LXNAV
LXNAV S-100
LnavS80
Lxnav, but not currently enabled.
Panel mounted Electric Turn and Bank
S80 has it available as an option, but I do not have that option in part because it is not allowed at contests.
XCsoar mini AH display.
air glyde
none.

4.6

Please comment on any available technology that you would like to be newly allowed in aircraft as per the contest rules.

4.5 comment... I answered no, but depending on my available resources and equipment prices I would consider adding ADS-B when I am able to.

ADS-B out TABs system is a real alternative to ELT’s. With costs for a TABs system at ~$500 or less... and no annual fees... Aeron's ADS-B tracking and emergency services would be enhanced. Flightaware.com is receiving the Aeron ADS-B tracks. FlightRadar24.com was able to track Ramy Yanetz's ADS-B system in the Dust Devil Dash flight all the way to landing with 10sec updates all the way to landing in north central Nevada this year.

ADS-B-OUT and IN should be ENCOURAGED for the purposes of collision avoidance with powered aircraft.

Adding authorized GPS source to ADSB this winter - the Flarm GPS data causes too many errors on the FAA monitoring site
Allow any new technology to be used. There is no way enforce what is used in the cockpit
Allow link up with programs such as SkySight or TopMeteo

Although I've not needed it, I don't like having to disable AHRS during a contest. Requiring a gopro to sort out near misses after the fact might be useful and would be an alternative for the cloud flying prevention.

Although it is not currently allowed, Remote Thermal Detection technology will eventually happen. I have been working on making this happen on and off for the past 34 years. It should be allowed when it happens. This will make soaring more popular, less
frustrating and somewhat safer. The most likely way this technology will work is for very limited ranges (~1000 feet). This does not take away from pilot skills such as cloud reading, hawk spotting and other currently used methods.

Any technology should be allowed. Nothing should be mandatory, except transponder and ADSB out.

Artificial horizon is a big plus on lower visibility days when the course line is into the afternoon sun. Nobody stays 500’ clear of cloud base. If someone climbs above cloud base you can see it in the igc file so why disallow? Of much bigger issue is the use of FLARM as a mandatory requirement and ADSB from a safety perspective.

Either get rid of the prohibition on gyro instruments (that's my preference) or enforce the rule.

I do not see the need for rules forbidding any technology in the cockpit that adds to safety. The rules do not allow cloud flying - but getting caught on top is a possibility. Tracking is easy and cheap these days - rules do not allow you to track your competitors. SSA or anyone can not stop cheating - the rules exist to stop unwanted behavior - our sport is small so everyone knows within minutes if anyone is dangerous, breaking rules or cheating. There is no need for the SSA Rules to do what the pilots would do themselves - Being Shunned is sufficient incentive to follow the rules.

I have experimented with the "goTenna" gizmo with the GliderLink app. It offers info on the location of other gliders with similar equipment, at ranges that are longer than FLARM. Currently not quite within the rules, but I think that at regionals where pilot-to-pilot communication is allowed in principle, it's a better choice than cluttering the contest voice frequency. Since it is an unencrypted broadcast the info is available to anybody (if they get the hardware), so it's not a team secret.

None

Please, let's try to keep the cost from climbing completely out of control.

Reading between the lines, it looks like the RC is considering making artificial horizons, legal! DON'T DO IT! I have seen a Contest glider exit a cloud. Two other contestants admitted cloud flying and icing up a tad! This was reported to SSA and nothing was done! When are we going to enforce the rules? After Joe Glider finds Joe Cessna in a cloud? PS, the guys I saw exit a cloud, won the contest! Both held Commercial Licenses and flew IFR on a regular basis. They had their cell phones attached to their canopy in a Duo Discus.

Remove all technology bans. Tech is way cheaper than gliders, so the cost argument is pretty silly.

Until the cost comes down I have no plan to install a transponder, ADS B Out, or Flarm unit in my club owned (rented) glider. My glider makes 3 ships (DG-505; Std. Cirrus, Open Cirrus) available to members for use at a contest.

Weather radar.

Wifi weather. See LXNav

With the LXNAV boxes becoming popular, you will see WX in the cockpit used widely this year.

ads-b already installed

everything

7.14a

Comment on finish penalties.

10 sec/ft is way too harsh. 10 sec/m (3 sec/ft) is still harsh (corresponds roughly to passing on the last 0.2 kt thermal) but would seem more appropriate.

10 sec/ft penalty changes in harshness depending on the length and competitiveness of the day. The point penalty less so I think in most circumstances

10 seconds per foot is way too high a price to pay. On a 3 hr task (180 minutes), a minute is worth 5.6 points Finishing 50 feet low (i.e. not much) would extract a 500 second penalty (8...3 minutes, or 47 points on a 3-hour task. Might be OK to make the penalty gradual (5 sec/ft first 100 feet, the 10 sec after that)....

Altitude penalties encourage safe flight. Time penalties do not.

Archaic laws that do not improve safety.

As I understand it, the finish cylinder with a floor was instituted to provide safety during a contest finish and landing. I think it works and should be kept and not modified much

As long as the penalty makes it favorable to take a 0.5-knot thermal over finishing low I'm fine.

Current rule is fine

Eliminate finish penalties. Reinstate rolling finishes.

FAI rules

Finish penalties should be only 1 minute per 100 feet low

Follow the FAI rules, stop reinventing or thinking you are smarter.

French time proposal is interesting because it takes into account time gained/lost by climbing to avoid a low finish. It is more understandable than a point penalty. Cochrane at one time when finish penalties were introduced stated it was worth taking a 0.25 kt climb to avoid the penalty.

Give some thought to use of motors during low finishes. At the PanAm speed points were garnered for a low finish and motor home from a 5km finish which wasn't deemed safe to attempt in a non-motored glider. This largely resulted in few people voting to give the FES gliders a 2% handicap advantage because the performance degradation was recovered in other ways.
Go for FAI rules.

Harsh penalty should exist for low finishes

Higher is safer. No issue with higher finish heights.

I believe this is a safety issue. Finishing below the minimum should be penalized harshly.

I don't like them at all. Any pilot that us unsafe at the finish can be penalized as the committee seems appropriate.

I favor harsh POINT penalties for low finishes, in part to reduce the number of competitors who get disqualified for REALLY low finishes, and in part to reduce attempts at last-minute climbs near the finish, that becomes a safety hazard too. Even more than this I think it is critical that the finish line/cylinder be far enough away and above the airport of the contest that finishers do have altitude and time to sort out landing patterns and deal reasonably with the potential for a jammed runway and multiple pilots landing simultaneously. Much of these issues revolve around the airport hosting the contest -- airports with a lot of runways and area are obviously much safer. To be candid, I refuse to fly our regionals held at Harris Hill (Elmira) because the field is simply too small for a contest ... and I learned to fly at Torrey Pines ... and I happily fly our regionals at Dansville. -- these two alternate years for the Region 3 contests. You asked about whether we'd be willing to host a contest -- 5B2 is not a good place for a contest, for reasons I won't go into. But I'd be happy to help hold a contest at a better site.

I prefer finish geometry that makes finish penalties unlikely. Crazy high cylinder floors close to the airport combined with harsh finish penalties encourage low thermalling on the last leg when the pilot still has an easy glide to the airport.

I think a hard finish cyl is a good thing. If someone comes in low, there could be a way to climb up to finish after entering the cyl.

I think there is a tendency to make the safety finish altitude too high in National contests. The penalties should be determined by the CD for each contest, if the situation is warranted.

I would favor a much more simplified system based on 50ft increments. 1-50 ft below assigned finish height=20 point score subtraction. 51-100 ft below assigned finish height=40 point subtraction etc. keep it simple and if you like harsh. I know finish height penalties are here to say, but I have never been a fan of them.

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It works now for Regionals.

It's not the finish it's the low final glide. Go get the traces from Uvalde 2018 and watch the carnage break out the minute low finishes are allowed.

Low finishes, especially with opposite direction landings, are a safety hazard, IMO.

No comment. I usually finish too high

No low finish penalty. Restore rolling finish.

None

Quit making the sport boring. Low Passes and Contest Finishes bring spectators. Penalties and rules are killing this sport.

Slightly too low minimal penalty Moderately too low moderate penalty Very low harsher penalty Sometimes sink on a final glide can cause a low finish, its luck of the draw ans IMHO should not be a high penalty. But if a pilot is final gliding at 130 knots and finishes low there should be a substantial penalty, tough to figure this out thou, takes time

The finish height should be set low enough that most pilots would consider it dangerous to finish that low. Then pilots finishing at normal height wouldn't have to worry and stare at their screens trying to make sure they don't accidentally incur penalty points for eyeballing the final glide once the airport is in sight.

The finish is always close to the airport - the penalties need to be increased until the option to finish low is as bad as landing out. a low finish should be a disaster to your score.

The finish penalty should be just enough it stings but not enough that it would necessarily take someone out of the running at a National contest. The finish time should run until they land and come to a complete stop plus the racer should also be assessed an arbitrary 25pt penalty.

The minimum finish height is a "virtual hard deck" and there is no excuse for pilots to bust it.

There is no competitive reason to lower the "old" US rule that below 200' the pilot has landed out -- other than to encourage cutting it close and negatively impacting safety. I would stick with the first 200' zone having a point penalty and below that treating the finish as a land out. I have never been at a contest where I recall a contestant saying that he opposed the landout rule. Nor have I ever been at a contest where a contestant said he stumbled into an low finish penalty because the weather changed. Low altitude low energy finishes (the two usually go together) are needlessly dangerous.

We are now very similar to FAI, now that we eliminated the "Cochrane landout" and FAI has seen the insanity of continuing the direct finish. Lever B

Whether time or points based, finish penalties should be proportional to max points that day. That is, on a 1000 point day, the full penalty, if any, is assessed. If max points due to devaluation are, say 500, then the finish penalty would be 50% of the nominal amount. On a heavily devalued day, the finish penalty for a modest altitude deficit can be a rather large fraction of the pilot's score.

lets go back to 50' and put some excitement back into this sport.

time penalty vs points penalty - if adopted - should be adjusted for our often very much higher finish heights. Otherwise they are too harsh. 1000' penalty would be 10k seconds which is 2.78 hrs.
7.6 Note that no workable "start speed limit" scheme has been found. 7.12 FAI rules always give distance credit to the center of the cylinder, so up to 1 km more than pilots typically fly.

Adopt the FAI Club Class list too. No more D2's ASW-28's, and LS-8's in Club Class.

After reading X and UH's recap of FAI rules I think they add too much danger to a already dangerous activity, glider racing. I go to contests for pure fun, don't like the gagglng aspect the FAI rules lean toward...Too much risk and stress IMHO

Changing the rules to FAI rules will have no effect on WGC results. Longer, harder tasking at US contests, more racing pilots in the sport, and a better selection process are much more important.

Do it as soon as possible it will help US pilots to do better in the worlds. The White paper by Nixon and Good was a hack job with the intent to influence this survey. They should be removed from any involvement with the SSA racing rules and contest committees. They should be reported to the SSA president for misconduct.

Do it or don't. Make a decision early so people can prepare. Don't wait until a week before the first contest.

FAI rules

FAI vs US rules? I guess I've followed the issues peripherally for the last couple of years. but honestly can't say that adoption one way or the other will affect my contest participation. I do like assigned racing tasks when they are called. I'm not sure that adoption of FAI rules will produce better US World teams. Seems like we are already sending our top pilots.

Fly FAI rules for a couple of years. See how we like them.

For regionals FAI rules should be optional. At Nationals they should be encouraged. We should train as we are going to compete.

Give it a go.... However, I don't relish the idea of landouts caused by the CD's calling tasks that "stretch the day"! fly contests for fun, sometimes do not have ground support and landouts definitely decrease my enjoyment of a contest.

Have not heard/seen a report on how well the Uvalde FAI experiment went?

I do not support it

I don't have really strong feelings on most of these questions. My concern mostly is providing clarity on what the rules actually are, especially as a relatively new contest pilot.

I expect a switch to FAI rules will decrease contest participation, once pilots learn the implications. Increased gagglng in low, weak conditions, start gate roulette, and more land-outs all have the potential for safety issues that most of us want to avoid. . FAI rules encourage gagglng on difficult days much more than US rules, and this effect cannot be effectively offset by local rules. Under FAI rules, on a task when there is any reasonable chance of landing out, the rational course of action is to join and stay with a gagle, the larger the better. This will disproportionately be the case on days with weak, low condition when large gaggles are least safe.

The benefits of flying with a gagle often lead to late start gate roulette, which in turn often results in late starts and the associated land-outs at the end of the day. Sure, most land-outs are safe, but as Kawa demonstrated recently, sometimes they are not. Big gagglngs and start gate roulette are good practice for someone going to a WGC. but another reason for the rest of us to choose OLC instead of a contest.

I feel we are overlooking two important effects when considering a change like this. The first is on participation. Our sport is dying generally and competition in particular. It's great to say we ought to be flying more aggressive tasks (longer, assigned tasks, no MATS, etc.) but those will increase landouts—which will definitely have a negative impact on participation. Yeah, putting a U.S. pilot on a task when there is any reasonable chance of landing out, the rational course of action is to join and stay with a gagle, the larger the better. This will disproportionately be the case on days with weak, low condition when large gaggles are least safe. The benefits of flying with a gagle often lead to late start gate roulette, which in turn often results in late starts and the associated land-outs at the end of the day. Sure, most land-outs are safe, but as Kawa demonstrated recently, sometimes they are not. Big gagglngs and start gate roulette are good practice for someone going to a WGC. but another reason for the rest of us to choose OLC instead of a contest.

I like start lines, finish lines, and assigned tasks. Not assigned in name only mini turn area tasks. When you say FAI classes for 2020 do you also include Club Class? That is an FAI Class... I do not prefer the new FAI handicaps. Seems to me they adjusted the handicap to intentionally shift the advantage to certain gliders. That's not the point of handicapping.

I like the idea but it would require a lot of education for most pilots in a short time period.

I participated in 7 FAI Category 1 contests. From my experience, I have some observations on the subject: 1. The experience we (US Team Pilots) need is in flying long Assigned Tasks (racing tasks) Our weakness is lack of experience flying in and out of weather and flying late in the day. Also we lack tactical experience which Assigned Tasks requires 2. The US start cylinder is by far safer and fairer. Everyone starts with the same energy (out the top) and hopefully below clouds if CD sets max height correctly. The amount of cloud flying in starts in Europe is ridiculous 3. The rest of the Rules differences (other than start) are of minor consequence.

I strongly feel that we should not allow ground to pilot communication. I think if crews can communicate weather and tracking to competitors it will lead to a huge advantage to some pilots for a couple of reasons. For one, competitors who are crewless will have a huge disadvantage once on task. Secondly, this will lead to the requirement to spend more money on technology (or crews) to be competitive at a high level. I think these disadvantages will primarily fall on the younger group of competitors. Considering one of the biggest barriers into the sport is cost, I think this is not a good idea.

I sympathize with the US team aspirants who are concerned that US racing does not adequately prepare then for WGC. I agree that this is the case. WGC has a very different tactical environment. However, Captain Obvious observes... rules are a secondary influence on the tactical racing environment. The primary inputs to the tactical environment are race venue (latitude, terrain, time of year, etc), weather, task setter and competitors. There is -zero- chance of creating a WGC tactical race environment in the US through changes to rules. All of the primary inputs will be substantially different.

I think a 1 year experiment to force folks to more fully understand the FAI rules is a good idea. A poll taken after that would be more informed for deciding what to do next.

I think if the plan is to move to FAI rules, do it one time. Do not stagger it over multiple years so we have to learn three different sets of rules.
try running just one Nationals in 2020 by FAI rules rather than all the FAI Nats. It might be less risky to try running just one Nationals in 2020 by FAI rules rather than all the FAI Nats.

It would be good to let pilots sort out for themselves whether they want FAI Rules or not and the best way I see to do this is to give them an opportunity for a couple of years to experience them. We certainly want our Team pilots getting better acquainted to them.

It would be pretty silly to jump to "classic" FAI scoring rules only to see them deleted in 2 years in favor of the "alternative" scoring rules which are very similar to SSA scoring.

I'm excited to continue the FAI rules experiment. Seriously though, what is an "FAI class"? I assume that's all classes except Sports, right?

Just do it, use the FAI rules including SeeYou for scoring.

Keep MAT in Regions only until FAI implements the handicapped distance task - which is fairer and has much less in-cockpit computer workload than a MAT and achieves nearly all the same goals in terms of accommodating different glider performance. Adopt the FAI-approved US scoring proposal for 2020.

Keep the test simple by using US rules with specific exceptions done by waiver.

Many national level pilots do not aspire to fly in the worlds. Let's not turn the nationals into a WGC practice drill, especially when our system is better.

Please pay attention to the fact FAI may change drastically within the 2 to 4 years. Be aware it takes two years for those rules to be implemented at IGC level. If it takes another year in USA, you might be applying FAI rules with a big delay. Some of the current FAI rules under discussion may well be much closer to the current US rules than you think!

Q 7.12 if I understand is relevant to a turn area task (or do you mean racing task?). For a racing task with small turn cylinders it makes little difference. Surely anyone keen on winning has a computer capable of telling them when to turn. For turn area tasks, credit should definitely be given, as the main use of this task (in our contest at least - Truckee FAI) is to set a task that can fairly accommodate a wide range of glider performance. Fast gliders fly to the back of the cylinder, slow gliders turn at the near edge.

Ref 7.1/7.2: Retain MAT task for use ONLY when there is a danger of losing a contest day necessary to make a valid contest. Ref 7.11: More investigation/definition required. Ref 7.3: Type of units used is totally irrelevant to the intent of the rules. Suggest English units merely to facilitate use of existing instrumentation and sooth ancient minds.

The change is relevant only to a small number of US pilots who might fly in international contests. Those folks will compete and fly whatever rules SSA applies. We already have a problem recruiting enough new pilots to fly contests. The FAI rules are not as safety friendly or as flexible as the current US rules. I think the move to FAA standards is a poor choice, and contrary to the goal of increasing contest participation at the entry level.

The evolution of US rules have made contests safer. Do not move towards FAI rules.

The key is a balance of racing and area tasks to keep the contest fun. Only using area tasks on iffy days is a blunder. At the PanAm we had mainly racing tasks which was a great puzzle but resulted in some less experienced pilots retrieving more than they are accustomed to.

There seems to be a misconception in the soaring community that a shift to FAI rules means team flying, ground support, mass landouts, etc., as are all common at World Gliding Championships. The current proposals seem geared to shift us to FAI tasking and scoring, both of which are generally similar to current US rules (coming from a pilot with recent experience racing under FAI rules). A lot of the advantages of US rules (e.g. limited handicapping in Standard Class, an airport landing bonus, etc.) should be incorporated into a US version of FAI rules. Marketing for the shift to FAI rules should better reflect the reality of the Rules Committee’s proposal.

There should be no issue with using FAI rules (i.e., mostly tasking, scoring, penalties) with specific "local procedures" stated for US competitions, such as max start height specified with 2 minutes rule and starting through the top if a cylinder is used, 10-Km (about 6-sm) radius start cylinders, airport bonus rule, etc.

This is like Brexit. It's already been voted for. Why are we voting again after not following the will of the pilots in 2018?

Time to fly by IGC rules, so many years lost of true competition flying

Try to follow FAI rules as much as possible.

US have good glider pilots we need to move to FAI rules to make them competitive in International competitions, Remember not everyone has time or money to participate to Contests outside USA just to train for FAI rules, good or bad that is what the rest of the world is using.

Whatever we choose will generally be ok, but lets deside on a standard and stick to it. Competators can then develop effective strategies within the given rules. A continual adjustment/changing of the rules only complicates matters and builds distrust and argument. Develop a set then lets stick with it. Fair for everyone that way.

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Please provide any general comments on the subject of moving to FAI rules for 2021.

A great idea providing it doesn't mean all racing tasks.

Agree we should be under FAI by 2021

As a comment to using FAI based rules. From what I can see the result of FAI rules is a LOT of gaggle flying/racing, actually rare not to. For many years the USA rule were optimized to reduce gaggle flying because of safety concerns. I agree with this and have always supported minimizing gaggle racing. Until such time as the FAI rules are changed and successfully reduce gaggle racing, I will not support their adoption.

Bring it on.

Changes the US rules to capture the most advantageous features of the FAI, then in following years add more changes to transition US pilots at a rate that causes minimal pushback.

Changing the rules to FAI rules will have no effect on WGC results. Longer, harder tasking at US contests, more racing pilots in the sport, and a better selection process are much more important.

Do it for all contests

Extend trial through 2021.

FAI rules

I am not for a strict move to FAI - SSA needs to maintain some flexibly is nationals and much more in regionals. Flying contests scares many pilots, adding more complication by dictating strict adherence to rules will just add one more hurdle. We have to have faith that people running contests know what they are doing and have the spots interest in mind.

I don't think a high percentage of US pilots understand the details.

I generally agree with transitioning to FAI rules while at the same time encouraging IGC to make changes Rick Sheppe supports for safety and fairness. We should not seriously discourage pilots from flying in Club Class and Sport Class competitions and maintain U.S. handicaps for Club Class. At the Regional level... prohibit ground support for tactical flying. Make a modest number of Local U.S. modifications to FAI rules for U.S. contests in line with our current U.S. rules.

I think it would decrease participation at all but the highest levels of competition and largely eliminate the sporting category most of us really enjoy. I don't think that's the direction to take sporting competition.

I would like to see the US adopt SeeYou for scoring and integration with SoaringSpot once the shift to FAI rules is complete. In a similar vein, I would like to see US contests integrated with the IGC pilot ranking system.

I would prefer to stay with US rules for the foreseeable future.

I'm against it generally for the reason stated in my answer to 7.15.

I'm of the belief that FAI rules will decrease participation in the long run. I don't believe the rules are the primary reason we aren't competitive at the WGC. I think if the rules favor gaggle flying some pilots (myself included) will be less inclined to fly at Nationals. I think the USA rules system develops better individual flying decision making - this may be different than the skills necessary to fly competitively in gaggles. I think our concern should be participation at SSA contests, not WGC rankings.

If the point is to get comfortable with FAI rules we should adopt what we can including the use of the metric system.

You play the way you practice.
It's not so traumatic a change as some on the RC seem to think. If you want to keep the airport bonus or engine start procedures I doubt anyone will complain.

Just Do It...

Just move to FAI rules do not wait

Make the move to the FAI rules. We will perform better on the international stage.

May take more than one year to work through the regional contest considerations.

Opposed. US rules are safer and less daunting thus promoting more participation.

Require minimum 40% or two days of Assigned Tasks in Regionals and 60% or three days in Nationals Keep US start rules unchanged The rest of the SSA vs FAI rule differences are irrelevant to safe, fair, and fun racing. Do whatever is politically best! Just don't spend too much time debayangels on a pin...

Same as 2020.

Same as above.

Same as point 7.15 above.

See Above

See above please

See above. Let's keep some perspective on what's important. We have FAI classes that are almost defunct in the U.S. (e.g. Standard). Knocking out a few pilots who won't come to a contest if they have to rely on friends to come pick them up from fields when the landout percentage goes up significantly because we want to "test" our pilots just like the Europeans make no sense to me.

Should have been done in 2019 as the opinion poll results were clear. Terrible question. Clearly an an anti FAI rule, pro US rule agenda here in this poll, as per usual.

Suggest FAI rules and scoring with US units. Keep the cylinder/start out of top option. Have the unlimited height line start available as an option.

The evolution of US rules have made contests safer. Do not move towards FAI rules.

This will require 2 sets of rules. National- much more like FAI Regional- much like current including MAT as a usable option.

Try to follow FAI rules as much as possible.

Understanding that the poll addresses use of FAI rules only for Nationals, it will be critically important for the survival of US racing to keep existing US rules for our Regional competitions. A great deal of thought and history has gone into the evolution of the US Rules causing them to be tailored to the US racing pilot community, including contest organizers. US rules do a much better job of providing a format for introducing pilots to racing and for offering the option of lower-stress racing attractive to many of our (now mostly) older pilots. Moving to FAI Rules for Regionals would be a huge mistake. Sports Class is not an FAI class. Don't eliminate Sports Class Nationals. The push toward FAI rules appears to be driven most strongly by our top US racers. Their primary goal seems to be to make US racing a better training and US-team selection format for FAI racing. This is a reasonable goal and our change to FAI racing would probably help. However, our success at the WGCs will depend not just upon US pilots becoming more familiar with FAI rules and procedures, but more importantly getting better at tactical gaggling, flying Assigned Tasks, and flying more aggressive tasks. Unfortunately, there are many National pilots who have little interest in flying contests with mostly Assigned Tasks, lots of gaggling, and significantly more aggressive tasking. Changing our Nationals to better train our US Team pilots will likely drive away many of us who enjoy flying Nationals but have no interest in being on the US Team and we won't have big gaggles at National contests if participation shrinks even further. It's also worth noting that US Rules currently allow a CD to not set MATs, to set more Assigned Tasks, and to set more aggressive tasks. A change to FAI rules is not required to do this. This is a matter for the CD, not for the rules-makers. Without adoption of many features of the current US Rules into Local Procedures (Handicapped Std Class, task changes in the air, no ground-up communications, no tactical pilot-pilot communications enabling tejas, safety finish, airport landing bonus, US start system) participation at US Nationals will likely be reduced and safety may be compromised. Would it be simpler to keep the US Rules with some tweaks and waivers to mimic FAI rules, rather than switch to FAI rules and then rebuild key US features into Local Procedures? If you end up at about the same place, why go through this? If part of this exercise is aimed at eventually replacing Winscore with SeeYou-competition scoring, please do this carefully. There may be some unintended consequences. Winscore is integrated into the SSA website/reporting system, handicaps, pilot ranking lists, etc. We also continue to get outstanding support from Guy Byars. Will SeeYou be as supportive? FAI rules are slowly moving closer to US rules. Having spent lots of time immersed in both FAI and US rules, I assure you that the current FAI rules are not really any better than US rules. It would indeed be better for our WGC oriented pilots to train with FAI rules and tasking. But will this be better for the overall US racing community? Safety and participation should continue to be top priorities. Thanks for all your work and for tackling these issues. Ken Sorenson

We want to be VERY careful to not make a rule change which is

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Comment on Airfield Landing Bonus for motor gliders.

25 points is a non determinant for my decision to head for an airport. If the goal is to increase the use of airfields for landouts then increase the incentive. Perhaps award some speed points, maybe in proportion to the maximum task distance achieved prior to the landing. This would really play well when the nearest airport is behind. If 800’ is safe for a low save it should be high enough for a safe finish without a penalty.

800 ft/2 sm is a good compromise. The motorglider can always choose to land for the bonus if a low save attempt is desired. Note that this rule is the Airfield LANDING Bonus

Airport bonus given if glider is at 800’ at 2 mi, 600’ at 1 mi, and 400’ over the airport boundary. If engine was deployed and did not start, it would still make the field. Even though an engine could be started on final at certain airports, this should be a good compromise.

And eliminate altitude restriction. Time to return to personal responsibility and common sense. Eliminating the airfield bonus does not preclude an aggressive racing pilot from following the spirit of FAI rules and landing out. Keep the airfield bonus as a modification to U.S. rules under FAI.

Height is not an issue - the distance should be 2 sm to keep away from power traffic and more importantly sky divers. 1 sm and 800 is too low and too close to avoid either. Most gliders have sustainers only - to have to land will make take AB out of the decision process so pilots will not go to airports - better to try a low save over a field and take your chances the motor will start.

I am voting to "Land for Bonus" but really want the Elimination of the Airfield Bonus all together. We need to move away from rules that reward motorglider pilots for being lazy.

I have a sustainer engine yet I fly as if I do not have an engine. There are also fields which have more room to land on than some airports, especially at 21m spans. Eliminate the airfield landing bonus.

I think the "low-save" limit should be lowered to 500 and 2 sm from the airport. 500 feet over an airport is enough to set up an approach with the option of motoring away from the pattern or landing if there the motor doesn't fire off. Most candidate airports have low traffic density, so pattern conflicts risk is low. 2 sm radius makes sense in that the center point, as defined in the contest data base, can and often is not really the middle of the airport, and to be within 1 mile might place you outside the landing pattern, where you should be for safety.

I think there are 2 separate issues. The bonus should stay for non-motor gliders but the distance/altitude requirements for motor gliders may cause safety issues

I'm sorry to say that I don't think sailplanes and motor gliders can compete fairly ... and I've flown both. This is particularly true of the new electrics, and electric sustainers. The problem is simply that if you know you have a motor, particularly a reliable one, you can take risks in difficult transitions that no sane sailplane pilot would take. It used to be that the unreliability of the motors, and the prospect of having that damned big spoiler hanging out in the wind and not starting, meant that flying a motor glider in a contest carried some real risks of being in a jam worse than with a sailplane ... and that made the motor-glider pilots wary of going into bad terrain low, just like real sailplane pilots. But now the flick of a switch will reliably get you out of there and even get you home, and that just changes the whole equation. Hearing them whine about the airport bonus is ridiculous.

IMO motor gliders should land at the airport. Not needing a 4-5 hour retrieve is a significant advantage. Even a short retrieve requires disassembly and reassembly. The landing bonus should be retained but only if one lands. A motor glider can take off and motor home and still get a bonus. Unfortunately a turbo does not have that option. So be it. All things cannot be equal!

If a motor glider starts the engine, his score should end there, instantly. If they want the airfield bonus, then land at an airfield other than the home field. No motor start allowed. If you can not land your glider without starting the engine, you are not a glider pilot. You are a power pilot who sometimes shuts down the engine.

If you decide not to adopt FAI Rules after 2021 then I would keep the 2018 Rule for motorgliders.

If you want to keep the bonus, make the motorglider height and distance a cone similar to the safety finish. Make max distance something like 3 miles and min distance and height something reasonable like the 1 mile 800 ft currently in place.

If your motor does not start, you want to be in or very near the pattern. If you have a motor, you should NEVER assume it's guaranteed to start. Assume the worse and prepare for the best.

It is not reasonable for a self sustainer to call on unicom, enter the pattern and then climb away. Last sentence is remarkably silly. MG pilots always have the same low-save option as non-MG pilots: simply don't use the motor.

Mandatory Landing to claim bonus.

Motor gliders have always had the "same right to a low save". If it doesn't work out, you land. I think we should eliminate the special motor glider rules.

Motor gliders have huge advantage over prue gliders

Motorgliders have such a advantage period, who knows how to score this?

Motors have advantages and disadvantages. Let's keep it balanced and not make the sport even more expensive.

No airfield bonus for motor gliders.

No comment -- cause I do not have an engine.
Comment on penalties.

As much as possible penalties should be defined within the rules for consistency. CD discretion, maximum penalty must be set in rules.

No opinion on the numbers, other than to observe that forcing a motorglider to land to get the bonus disadvantages sustainers. I do think motorgliders have an advantage under certain circumstances (and the reverse) but it doesn't effect me in Standard Class. I would not want to eliminate the airfield landing bonus for all gliders (choice E, above). I'm from the old school when we landed out a lot more. But I'm crewless now so I'd like to keep the incentive to land on an airport to get an aero retrieve, in addition to the reduction of damage claims.

Now that I fly a motorglider, I have come to understand that restart is not just the push a button and get out of jail option that pure glider pilots think it is. Keep it flexible. The commitment to restarting at decent altitude is a really important force.

Pilots flying with motors already have multiple advantages during the competition. They should not be able to collect an airfield bonus without actually landing.

Prioritizing safety supports the idea of expanding the credited save area. Eliminating the airport bonus is another example of why the FAI rules are a poor choice for SSA.

Should probably be even higher than the 2018 rule.

The altitude should be higher at 2 sm away from the airport. If you have a gas sustainer without a starter, you lose somewhere around 300' in the start process. If you are 2 miles away from the airport at 700' with your motor but not running, you won't make the airport. All sustainer gliders should have the same advantages and disadvantages regardless of power plant. If we can't make the rule equal for all sustainers, I favor eliminating the airport bonus for all.

The claims regarding increased accident rate due to outfield landings of high performance motor equipped gliders is going to ruin the insurance rates for us pure glider xc fliers! The vast majority of motor glider related accidents has been due to guys falsely "depending" upon their motor to save them from bonehead decisions to fly into rough or unlandable terrain. I feel a motor glider equipped pilot should be encouraged to fly their machine in the same fashion as a pure glider, namely, if flying over rough terrain only cross if you have a landing spot in sight or you have sufficient altitude to cross. Lighting off the motor should be done AFTER already having a spot picked out for landing and should not be depended upon. Any rules that encourage or award dependance upon motor saves should be eliminated.

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The last thing you want, if the aim is to improve safety, is motorgliders starting their engines lower (OR lower *and* further from the airfield). The 2018 rule seems plenty good-enough.

The motorglider pilot always has the option to try and "low save" near an airfield and LAND if it doesn’t work.

The odds of a save from less than 800 ft become less and less. As owner of a SLMG, I think 800/1 is about right. After all, the motor doesn’t always start, and may not retract!

There will never be satisfaction for all. Don't waste time trying to get it. Err on the side of safety.

These guys all say they pop the engine no lower than 1500' with a landable field within reach, so how's safety improved by letting them pop the put-put at 2 miles and 800'? If it doesn't start, can they fly 2 miles with 800' with the engine out? I don't think so!

They have engines, I don't have any sympathy.

To get an airport bonus you need to land at the airport. Getting the bonus plus an "easy retrieve" tilts too far to favoring motor gliders.

Under the current rules, motorglider pilots do have the same right to a low save as motorless glider pilots. If they attempt a low save and it does not work, they have the same right to land and receive the airfield landing bonus like any motorless glider pilot. They can even start their motors after a failed low save below the current 800' AGL threshold; they just will not receive the airfield landing bonus for doing so. The rules merely establish a threshold below which is likely unsafe to attempt a motor start (FES excluded). Moreover, nothing in the rules stops a motorglider pilot from landing to claim the airfield landing bonus, starting the motor, and taking off towards home. Likewise, the rules do not force pilots to enter airport traffic patterns at low altitudes to perform engine starts that potentially create traffic conflicts and confusion. Rather, poor judgment does. I think that if anything, the current rule is too lax and potentially detrimental to motorglider safety because it can encourage pilots to exercise poor judgment by attempting motor starts at unsafe altitudes. As a result, if anything, I think that the rule should be raised to 1000' AGL (or higher) at 1 sm from the center of the airfield. The rules can't stop pilots from exercising poor judgment, but they can de-incentivize it. Ultimately, whatever rule is implemented needs to 1) allow a safe pattern and landing after a failed engine start with the boom up, and 2) apply to all motorgliders, taking into account that what is safe and acceptable for a FES-equipped glider is not the same for a 1980s vintage glider with a sustainer. This is coming from a pilot who currently flies 1-2 contests annually in motorgliders.

9.2

"Discretion" is subject to personal bias. Penalties should be clear but modest (small), for all but egregious sportsmanship or safety infractions. Remember that our sport is based on pleasurable participation, and a whopping penalty for a minor screw up might discourage already-flagging participation.

Allow CD altitude but expand recommended penalties.

As much as possible penalties should be defined within the rules for consistency.
CD latitude puts the CD in a no-win situation. No matter what the CD decides, some will accuse the CD of being too lenient and the penalized pilot will accuse the CD of being too punitive. With a preassigned penalty, everyone knows what to expect. I've finished under the line a few times. Took my lumps without complaint.

CD's know what's going on. If some guy is being an ass, hit him hard. If it was a honest mistake and the pilot owns it, let the CD be a on the spot judge.

CD's often work with heir peers and friends. Giving discretion to the CD opens an avenue for subjectivity and peer pressure in some instances.

FAI rules

Give the CD latitude where a penalty hasn't been designated already. I would suggest the RC try to figure out what violations would likely require a designated penalty so as to avoid politics inserting themselves into a CD's decision.

Having been a CD, I will refuse to be a CD in the future if I am not allowed to use my judgment to ensure a safe contest or to adequately correct an improper score or contestant behavior. Not because I believe that my judgment is flawless, but because EVERY contest site is unique, and the mix of pilots and gliders and skill-levels at that event is unique. No matter how complex the rules are, they can NEVER cover every single instance or deal with nuances or extenuating circumstances. Ask yourself: How much to people love the inflexibility of the FARs?!

I had a CD who wanted me to resign from the contest because he THOUGHT he saw me circling in line with the takeoff runway. My track shows I was circling off the side of the runway. He saw someone else. Pilots need protections from wacky CDs. I think pre-assigned recommended penalties should be available. But the CD should have discretion to modify it. A recommended ranges of penalties could be available. For example Penalty for violation of rule X has a recommended penalty of between 100-300 points.

I think the CD deserves some latitude, however some categories of penalties could help guide him/her. I don't think every possible rule infraction needs to be spelled out.

I trust most, but not all CDs I've flown under to exercise discretion appropriately. Just what are we talking about here? This is too hypothetical and vague.

KISS and flexible

Latitude puts the CD and fellow competitors in a really tough position. At least, it did in this case example.

Let's make it clear and take the burden off the CD. Then we eliminate hurt feelings that often hurt others beside the pilot and CD. This sport is about fun to make penalties clear like airspace penalties.

Maybe, we need a combination of Preassigned and CD Latitude? Some penalties like airspace violations need to be preset and progressive (i.e. the bigger the violation, the bigger the penalty) without any CD Latitude. However, in the case of unsportsmanlike penalties maybe need some flexibility?

Penalties should be pre assigned, eliminated any subjective nature to race scoring.

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Penalty for motor start should be end of scoring. No airfield bonus.

Provide guidance for most rule infractions

Some guidance on a couple of penalties probably wouldn't hurt but you can't cover every possible scenario.

Specific guidance should be given for standardization. CD should be allowed to ask for some variance by presenting extenuating circumstances to the rules committee. There should be clear guidance of the need for the variance rather than a characterization of the event. Characterization example by a CD, "The offending pilot created an unsafe situation because his pattern entry was different." Clear evidence, "The offending pilot created an unsafe situation because his pattern entry caused a near midair collision. The flarm/IGC file was measured at 200 ft CPA."

Specific values but a range. Major violation woule be at the high end. Inadvertent infraction would have the lesor each contest should have a "jury " nominated by the contestants at the beginning

Standardize point deductions on as many penalty infractions as practical. Do not let the CD bias come into play and that may favor one pilot over another.

Stripping a pilot of ALL the day's points for an airspace violation is draconian. Adding time to the flight and recalculating the speed should be the rule or consider the point of violation a "Landout". I was struggling to stay aloft in an area and circled briefly in what the CD considered prohibited airspace. Being stripped of all my day's points (plus points from a previous day) just was simply too harsh. I spent well over $1200 for the week to fly the contest and this draconian rule was souring. I consider safety-related issues more concerning.

Take the pressure off the CD and preassign penalty points

The rules should be more specific as to what latitude the CD has. There was an instance that come up this season in which the CD asserted that he had no latitude at all, and that seems at odds with the background presented in this question.

Trust the CD, but you can back them up with suggested/historical penalty values.

Under FAI rules, common rules infractions are assigned corresponding penalties (for first and subsequent violations). With the impending shift to FAI rules, the US rules should adopt this approach and give the CD the latitude to award penalties not otherwise covered by the rules and to increase penalties for egregious rules infractions.

Why add to an already difficult job. without guidance the penalty will ALWAYS be viewed as too much or too little - depending if you are getting the penalty or your competitor is.

no win situation here. allow latitude for the cd's.
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<th>Comments on combining the Standard and 15M Class Nationals? (or other contests)</th>
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| 18m and open class combined works well. A logical way to increase participation. Adjust standard class handicaps to accommodate older standard class ships (cirrus, asw 19, libelle, dg100...) to encourage competitive competition for younger pilots. Right now, an ls4 or discus is the barrier to entry for standard class. Also combine 20m unflapped (Duo) into the 15m and Standard into East and West Nationals. Club Class is most popular FAI class in US. We don’t need latest Std gliders to support Club. We need LS6,8, Ventus, D2, ASW28 in 15m/Std mixed class. Combined contests are necessary. A contest with 6 participants is not fun. Current handicaps are reasonable and combining classes makes the contest operation more financially viable with a larger population of pilots. This may incentivize organizers to hold this contest. Don’t really care, but the standard folks need help and it’s fine to combine and have better parties. Don’t want another handicapped race. Standards can race in sports class. Either we had or have this ability today at the discretion of the contest organizers. Why don’t we just do that. Otherwise, I don’t support forced combination. Give each class their own Nationals. Given the great difficulty in recruiting enough contestants at some national contest (i.e., the Sports Class and standard nationals this year, for example), there does not appear to be a choice but to combine classes. Combining the 15m and Standard is a sensible response to the problem. Handicapped Std/15M I don’t feel that I have a knowledgeable position on this. I doubt I will ever fly a nationals in my nominal class with any expectation of being "competitive" … combination of my skill level and flying a Discus (not Discus II) I don’t like combining the two, but I also accept that it may be necessary to preserve the sport. I think it would be better to combine standard with club class, but in any case I agree with the idea of combining classes to create a more competitive environment. I think this is a good idea. A larger overall class flying the same task with small difference in performance handicapped. Several countries take this approach. I would combine standard and club also. I would rather see standard and 15m combine than see standard take over club class. I'm a Standard Class pilot. The last Standard National I participated in had reasonable turnout. I was signed up and on the road for 2019 Standard Nationals when it was called for weather. I was unable to make the rescheduled date. I am not fundamentally opposed to combined Nationals, but would prefer retaining separate contests unless/until participation numbers dictate otherwise. I've flown a lot of FAI Combined contests (Std and 15M), handicapped and otherwise. So, yes, let's explore this concept more at the National level. In favor of 11.1 only if scored separately. Handicaps then not required. In favor of combining when necessary. Perhaps they can share site/schedule but task/score separately if turnout allows? It does present a problem for me because I plan to fly in both Nationals, 15 M and Standard. I think the best way to increase attendance at Standard Class Nats is to make sure that the Standard Class is located at a central, prime location where pilots want to fly. TSA had very good attendance in 2018. It should depend on whether potential participants would be deterred by the use of handicaps - some like them and some don't. I only fly Sports so what do I know. It's inevitable. At minimum hosting them together is a smart contingency plan so we don't get skunked by low attendance in one or the other. I'm a huge proponent of this. I think increasing the size of our competitions is imperative for increasing the competitiveness of the US Soaring Team at World Gliding Championships because an 8-pilot championship does little to prepare pilots to fly in an environment with 40+ highly competitive pilots. With a combined Standard and 15M Class Nationals, I would also like to see Standard Class pilots receive pilot rankings in both Standard and 15M Class. In addition, for the sake of increasing contest participation, I support adding limited handicap in a combined Standard and 15M Class Nationals to allow older Standard class ships (cirrus, asw 19, libelle, dg100...) to encourage younger pilots to participate. Larger contests seem to me to be more sustainable. To put on a good event you need critical mass. We need as many good large contests as possible - combining as we shrink or expanding if we grow seems reasonable to me. Loosing Standard class pilots (even while being a declining group) can have a financial adverse affect on running a contest ... especially nationals. I think we have to do it to have standard and possibly even 15M to survive. If it's not a choice, but a final decision to do this here on out, the pilots will not have to fight it out each contest. Just do it. My first Nationals was a handicapped Standard Class Nats (Montague, 2012) and it was a very enjoyable experience. No comment. Not practical without a properly calculated handicap list taking into account ballasted gliders. Currently, rule 5.7.3.4 would apply, which would assign DRY handicaps to ballasted gliders, which would be totally inaccurate and lead to significantly unfair situations.
for some glider variants.

Note that 15M nats have also seen declines.

Schedule both contests to be held concurrently with same start times and tasks. If there are not enough Standards, combine them with the 15's.

Should join them You need mass to pay the bills

Std class gliders may be flown in 15m with no handicap. Let's not kill the 15m class over this.

The bigger question has to do the venues. Are there enough locations that can hold events and if combining classes will reduce the number of eligible locations it should not be done. If combination is done, of course fair handicaps must be used and automatically be in the scoring program.

The declining participation in the Standard Class probably has more to do with the location of the contest. It looked like the Standard Class Nationals in 2018 were quite successful in Texas. I have very rarely seen a good contest come out of Caesar Creek. I am not going to use my limited and precious vacation time to travel to marginal soaring conditions for 10 days. I am sure if there was a Standard Class Nationals in Nephi, there would be dozens of gliders signed up.

The only benefit is simplifying contest placement by effectively eliminating a class. Attempting to “handicap” the two types will be unsatisfying to most. The Std's will be slightly advantaged in the east where there is usually weaker weather and shorter glides and will be seriously disadvantaged in the west with strong weather where they can't fly fast enough. Placing Std so that it is not against Club or 15M allows Std pilots to have the possibility of a healthier class. Pairing with 20M accomplishes this. The motivation from this seems to come from the USTC that wants larger fields in the theory that that helps train pilots better for WGC. My expectation is that all it will do is reduce participation when Std pilots stay home because there is no nationals for their class.

This is essential to keep a competitive pool of standard class pilots. Some work needs to be done on the handicap - Peter Deane has done some great work here but I'm not sure you could sell an 8% handicap advantage to an LS-8 versus ASW-27 at Uvalde or any handicap advantage at Harris Hill.

Very few new Standard class gliders are being purchased. If we don't combine the classes, sooner or later, Standard class will cease to exist - at both the US and FAI level.

already be used

yes if needed

11.5

Comments on increasing contest participation.

“Proper” rotation of classes should allow pilots to fly in their class at a reasonable distance from home 2 out of 3 years. This assumes east/central and west/central rotation. Placing contests is mostly about getting organizers to agree to run events. We also need various sites to allow pilots to expand their skills.

1)Don't worry about it. It is what it is. 2)Never combine 15/18 or 18/Open since most ships these days can do either one. I didn't compete in 18m because I chose Open. If18m had been at a different place at a different time, I would have flown in an additional contest. 3) More magazine articles extolling the value of competition learning by contest winners writing super good stories.

11.3 - It is sometimes hard to find willing contest sponsors. Doubling the number of contests may make finding contest sponsors more difficult.

11.3 Shifting to East and West Coast Nationals will be detrimental for US Soaring Team performance. A national championship at a strong western site like Nephi in no way prepares a pilot for a weak flatland soaring cite in central Europe. 11.4 Participation should be considered when approving bids for national championships, but we also need to face the reality that there are only a handful of volunteers willing to organize soaring contests Formalizing contest mentorship programs (e.g. having one or more experienced pilots at the contest host daily briefings for new pilots) and/or assigning experienced contest pilots to mentor new racers (as is required for the junior contest rebate program) may help boost contest participation by eliminating psychological barriers for new racing pilots. I would also like to see the limited handicapping currently used in Standard Class expanded to additional classes (e.g. 15M). For example, I do not own a modern 15M glider, but would regularly attend 15M Class Nationals if handicapping allowed my 1980s vintage 15M glider to race competitively.

11.3 would multiply the need for finding hosting sites/clubs, which is already difficult. Another possibility would be to have 2 venues East and 2 venues West, each regrouping more classes as in the IGC format. For example, one venue could regroup Open, 18m, and 2-seaters; and the other venue would regroup Club, Sports, Standard, and 15m. With such a split, insufficient participation in one class would allow moving gliders to another, e.g., not enough 2-seaters would go into Open, or not enough Std would go into Club or Sports (but not into 15m, or if so with no handicap adjustment for Nationals!!)

11.4 does not reflect the reality that there are few bids in a year... we take what we can get from the folks who are willing to organize contests. Also, there should be some consideration as for training people for world competitions. And there's fairness... pilots have a variety of skill sets; some are better at weaker, flatland flying, others in technical, balls to the walls flying in Nevada. A variety of sites is good for the sport.

Also combine 18m and Open plus flapped 20m (Arcus) into East and West Nationals Prohibit gliders with spans greater than 15m from entering into Sports Nationals. This will focus the long wingers into the the two East and West combined long wing Nationals, thus increasing number of contestants to make both Nationals viable.

Being closer to hotels or easy to arrange campers is helpful. Good restaurants nearby is also helpful. It takes less pilot planning to attend a bigger site.

Best to have Nationals at "outstanding" sites, but we need to have a mechanism whereby new outstanding sites can be added to the list. I'm sure there are places that have never had any glider activity that would be excellent soaring sites.
Contests need to be seen as a fun use of people's limited vacation time, first and foremost. The vast majority of contest pilots know that they aren't going to win the event, so you have to provide them other reasons to be there. Fun flying, an outstanding site, a supportive atmosphere, camaraderie & socializing, easy "on-boarding" from flying XC to entering your first contest, etc.

These are far more important than rules changes or adding "East and West" events.

East and West nationals, I voted no, but would vote yes if we were hosting two nationals (east and west) at fantastic sites with three combined classes at each.

Even "National Capable" sites can be washed out with bad weather, but perhaps are more likely to produce enough good soaring days to make the long trip worthwhile? Certain sites are marginal in size to take 60+ gliders, that possibly put some people off.

Having 2 nationals is nuts, IMO. That's not a nationals, by definition. And it's no solution to declining participation! Alternating the nationals around has been the tacit understanding, yes? Is the real problem that this means that finding "nationals capable" soaring sites has been a problem in some areas? Yes, the Nationals should be at "Nationals Capable" soaring sites ... but if we are to field a world-level team we must not limit our site selection to the great western-desert sites, because the fact of the matter is that contests are almost always won or lost on the weak days. I expect to fly a nationals one of these days, probably the Club Class. I'm willing to travel ... I flew the Ephrata regionals and the Logan OLC this summer ... driving my rig there and back from Albany NY. Now I will admit that a big part of the draw was to do some western soaring, but those going to a nationals need to see the nationals AS THE DRAW, and presuming I get a bit better than I am now so I think I could at least be middle of the pack at a nationals, then I'd want to fly one. But I bring this up to make a point -- I'll never represent the USA at a world contest, so what is the point of really working to get me to come to a nationals ... to the extent that the nationals are the highest level of competition in our country, held in part to select our world team? What's the point? If the nationals rotated among a very few sites east, west and south, that would be fine.

Having Nationals Capable locations may be an interesting concept but in the long run is it feasible? It puts a lot of pressure on that location and the people involved to be ready to hold a Nationals every year or two or three. On the positive side it will allow competition to get more familiar with sites and possibly eliminate some of the local knowledge factor.

Having more contests will just reduce participation at each and hence not be attractive for organizers. Having "National Capable" designation does not recognize the fact that getting a group to run the contests is difficult. You could "designate" us out of having national contests. National contest sites come and go over time.

Hold contests at great sites during the best weather, even if you have to have them again and again at the same site. Parowan was hugely popular until the infrastructure caved in, Look at Nephi, always popular because the odds for great flying is high, that's what we want, the chance for great flying

I am strongly opposed to limiting Nationals to outstanding soaring sites if that means they have consistent super soaring conditions. This would be a poor way to determine who is our champion.

I believe that a strong presence on the international stage will benefit the sport.

I don't think you can split the Nationals and expect the organizers to break even. It would need all the classes to be at the same time and that impacts the folks with multi-class capable gliders. Outstanding sites has some merit. One of the challenges now is we are repeating some sites too often. I've been to Hobbs about 6 times already and often the weather is little better than New England. Nephi is absolutely worth the drive, as was Logan UT.

I have been frustrated by the SSA's take on the Club Class. The Club Class exists to make old, inexpensive gliders within a certain handicap range competitive in a racing class. The Club Class should remain true to this spirit. I have acquired such a glider: a Glasflügel Kestrel 17. My sailplane is fair competition against an ASW-20, and it has the same handicap. It is a beautiful ship, but it is old and does not keep up with Discus 2s, ASW-28s, and LS-8s (which are 3-4 times the price). Despite this, the Kestrel is prohibited from the Club Class because its span is 17m. The Open Cirrus and Diamant (which Steve Leonard wanted to fly during the 2019 Club Class Nationals) also fall into this category. I can immediately think of two US clubs that own Open Cirri, but these clubs can't send these gliders to compete in the Club Class nationals. I know of zero US clubs that own an ASW-28 or a Discus 2. In my opinion, it is outrageous that the new gliders, which are competitive in Standard Class, 15M, Sports Class (and some even in 18M!!!) are permitted to fly in the Club Class, but those of us with legitimate, inexpensive, old, lower-performing gliders are banned because "our spans provide an unfair advantage." The Kestrel fits in the [American] club class handicap range. So does the Open Cirrus. Apparently an extra two meters of wing is a bigger advantage than another 25 years of airfoil/structural design evolution found on the Discus 2 or ASW-28. As I see it, we should either adopt the FAI club class definition and conform to the rest of the world, or expand our definition to be more inclusive. I'm not sure where the span restriction came from. It seems arbitrary and unnecessary, particularly because both the Kestrel and Open Cirrus exist on the Australian Club list, and the FAI list includes a 16M Cirrus B. Either way, the spirit of the Club Class has been lost when I'm not even permitted to take my $15k glider designed in 1967 to compete against $70k gliders designed in 1997. To be clear, I'm fine with the new stuff remaining in the class. However, given that the list is already completely whack, there is "no" basis to limit the rest of us from having fun, too. Isn't the purpose of the Club Class to encourage participation from people who don't have the means to own a hot, new racing ship?

I have no opinion either way on question 11.3 and 11.4. I do know some very good pilots will not fly national contests due to the sometimes excessively competitive nature of them, but do fly regional contests. So if a national contest replaced a regional contest or perhaps was even held in conjunction with regional contest, these pilot would likely not fly.

I haven't seen much difference in participation based on driving distance. Expected weather seems to matter a lot more. We'll drive to Uvalde. A lot of pilots just can't get excited about driving to Caesar Creek or Cordele but distance is only part of the reason. The concept of Nationals Capable sites seems to go against the notion of having pilots who can fly in all types of conditions.

I suggested years ago that a real option for us would be to have east/west coast nationals in alternate years and major team selection nationals at outstanding soaring sites (ideally centrally located) in the intervening years. This would help resolve many participation and logistical burnout issues.

I think both the east/west coast and limited sites is a bad idea. The east/west isn't fair for team selection. Those flying in TX, UT, NV may not be prepared for flying in Europe the same as an east coast pilot. How also can we have a "national champion" when now we have seven nationals and we're holding that times two. Locating the contests will also be difficult and we'd be cutting the competition size in half which is the opposite of what our goal should be - larger competitions.
I think it's important to have the Nationals at a variety of locals to favor overall pilot skill. If the Nationals are used to pick WGC contestants, having only strong conditions may not be ideal to pick pilots flying in weaker European conditions.

I would be in favor of experimenting with both ideas but think there is risk in each. Definitely needs to be tested and tried, at this point. I almost did not click either question because I'm just not certain.

It seems to me that we just need to grow more grassroots contest pilots. Club and Sports classes need to be solidly supported. I like Club Class quite a bit - I think it's a dynamic class with young(er) pilots and good racing. New 15m, 18m and Open competitive ships are going into the stratosphere costwise and that is automatically going to limit participation.

It's a big country, having 2 or 3 super-regional "nationals" is certainly no worse than having dozens of "nationals" in Europe.

Lack of contest participation is a major problem for competitive soaring in the US. It may be linked to an aging pilot population and declining numbers of glider pilots. It goes beyond the scope something that the Rules alone can solve. But within the Rules process anything reasonable that can be done to encourage increased participation should be considered.

Many of us own 15/18 meter gliders. In 2020 the 15m Nationals are in Nevada and 18m Nationals in Utah. I flew both contests in 2019 but (because of driving distance) will likely fly neither in 2020.

Many people do not have time to drive 2500 miles one way to a contest site.

More pilots (who are not chasing the team slots) will travel to venues that provide the best soaring conditions. Non team pilots (like me) fill out the field to make the contest work. They are less likely to sign up for contests held at sites that have a rep for poor weather or are difficult/ very technical.

My vote for east/west is conditional on combining classes with handicaps to get reasonable numbers. All nationals should have at least 20 entrants. Any less on a persistent basis and a class should be combined. E/W in 6 classes is too fragmented. Most other countries combine classes with handicaps. The US is the size of the EU.

National Contests are too long. Add in the travel time, and I no longer have enough vacation time available to reach some of these sights. An east/west coastal national contest format would certainly increase participation. I was a part of an organization that had this format and it helped greatly. There would be National Club Class Competition and an American Club Class Competition, both with the same weight, but in different locations.

National Contests are Nationals! Only one site per year. Otherwise there will be arguments. East coast sites favor east coast pilots ans such for west coast and mount sites. Hobbs is generally a good site but need a cross runway. Nephi is a good site but it is limited in length for 65 glidees. Mifflinwis a good site.

National ought to mimic conditions found at the next WGC in at least one of the two preceding years.

No comment.

Perhaps... The definition of "outstanding" is a concern. Site quality is subject to selective amnesia when it comes to typical number of rain days because flying "there" is just so great when the weather is great that you just forget the days off or wimpy miserable soaring.

Pilots have enough trouble with the existing rules. I don't see how a whole new set of rules (FAI) will do anything but discourage pilots from participating, particularly with the threat of causing more gaggling and landouts.

Regarding East and West Coast nationals... I could be convinced either way depending on various arguments. Overall, I think it would dilute participation.

The main factor in holding a well attended contest is location. If I'm going to take 2 weeks vacation to attend an Nationals, I want to go to a site that has a good chance of great soaring conditions.

There would have to be enough "Nationals Capable" sites with several alternatives available

To improve the overall quality of Us pilots we need to race more. East and West nationals would increase participation and allow those that wish to drive to fly more contests.

Two 18m nationals in one year requires two willing contest sites (not easy to find), each of which might struggle to get enough participation.

Use 7 day rather than 10 day nationals....

Variety in siting may be necessary to get contests hosted. If you want to place Nationals more frequently at awesome sites I won't complain, but the East Coast pilots might start to gripe about all the driving. ;)

Weather is too tickle and getting worse.

Wholesale change in american work ethic. mandatory 6 week paid vacation, return to 40 hour work weeks. universal basic income. white house invitations for national champions. prize purses. I would need more information on what you would consider a "nationals capable" site before answering yes to 11.4. If sites are selected properly we already basically have East/West nationals.

Most people are flying 15/18, 18/20m2seat/Open & Standard/Club gliders. If these classes are not competing at the same site then almost every pilot has the choice to fly two nationals plus Sports. Speaking of how much longer are we going to drag out Sports Class? I think some thought needs to go into what is exactly the point of this class and is that goal being achieved. If not what changes to the class definition need to be made to achieve that goal. Are we costing participation in the 15 & 18m nationals?

Just looking at the entry lists in the last three years it seems that might be the case. Why aren't Club Class & lower performance gliders showing up? They used to but not really, 2016 was the last year that something lower than an ASW-20 competed.

shorten to 1 week.

suggest splitting nationals to east/west contests only for classes that have 40+ participants.

To me this is more of a logistic issue - if you know something is in the same place every year at the same time, you can plan and the place can also plan for the event. i.e. Sr's in FL This is a huge country - East and West similar events makes sense. as it sits now, from the outside view the SSA and Soaring contests business model is made for pilots who are retired or in contention to be Team members.
we flew two contest days in 2019 in which we laid a GP race on top of a traditional contest giving competitors two chances for points each day. we also offered prize money which heard no objections. if the money was big enough it could influence the participation.

14.2

In 2018 we encouraged Contest Managers to provide contestants their Pilot Kit via electronic means, cutting down on contest printing expenses. We asked that paper copies be provided to those pilots who wanted one. However, there are some items that pilots have said that they would like to have always printed. Please comment on what you would like to see still printed out in the contest packet for all pilots.

ALL PDF’s is the way to go.

Absolute #1 is a decent turnpoint map. The "Dart Maps" are really beautiful, great for planning and a lovely souvenir ... but a decent carry-it-in-the-cockpit paper turnpoint map becomes a necessity in many situations, particularly a MAT. Another annoying problem is that at many airports you cannot buy a sectional anymore. I still feel that it is safety & regulation mandatory to have a sectional in the cockpit, in the event that my flight computer quits (and it has) so I think it should be a requirement that they be available at the contest site.

Airport Map Local Frequencies Local Procedures Tie Down locations

All electronic is fine.

All electronic, eliminate paper

Can't think of anything

Complete race packet should be available in elect form and paper form

Complete race packet should be available in elect form and paper form

Contest area map with TPs should be paper. Same with airport maps. Everything else can be electronic.

Contest area map with turnpoints.

Contestant list with contact info. Field lay out with operating procedures.

Either works for me. Should be left up to the CM

Grid Sheet Task Sheet List of Contestants

I can print anything I need.

I do not need anything printed from the Pilot Kit. I own a printer. :-)

I think they should be available electronically but always provided as printed copies.

I would always like a waterproof wrinkle proof turnpoint map

I would like to have all the important stuff printed and handed to me please

I would like to see documents that a pilot might want to keep in the cockpit (e.g. a turnpoint list) always printed in the contest packet. I also think that contest organizers should consider cell service availability at their site before deciding whether to print Pilot Kits. Some sites (e.g. Newcastle) have limited cell service with some providers, making it difficult for some pilots to access their electronic Pilot Kit at the airfield.

I'm OK with the entire Pilot Kit being delivered entirely and exclusively via electronic means.

I'm fine with all electronic.

I'm happy with electronic communications. That way I can save them and refer to them electronically at any time on multiple platforms.

ID tags are nice.

Jim Darke’s maps are awesome and welcome when available. At a minimum these should be printed. The rest of the docs can be electronic. The pilots will adapt.

Keep the rule for printed material as is.

Keep the rule for printed material as is.

Land out cards

Landing airfield notes. I would always like to have a paper copy of the prior day's scores.

Landout cards

Let the contest managers do this at their own discretion. Make paper copies available at the contest for those whose emails are incorrect or did not receive the pilot package.

List of all pilot AND CREW NAMES w/contact information. (Best after 1st day) Event/social schedule.

Local rules for traffic pattern and relight procedure.
Make available in PDF format on website and have pilots print what they need.
Maps
NOTHING!
Needs to be sent out two weeks in advance as those that have limited internet access will be prepared.
No comment -- I usually print the Pilot Kit before the contest anyway
No comment.
No need for any printed material..
No preference. Electronic seems reasonable.
None
None
None I can think of.
Nothing and there should be NO option to ask for print out, just print from electronic format at pilot own expense.
Nothing.
Printed materials should include a map of the contest area, key contact information (contest staff, local FAA/ATC numbers, etc), and critical procedures or safety concerns that are unique to the home airfield/environment.
Printed out on request by a pilot.
Printing on paper should not be mandatory. Leave it up to the discretion of the local contest organizer. The only minimum should be an updated (not a recycled version of last year's kit) electronic version of the pilot kit. Some details change year to year. At a regional that I participated in this year, 2019, the organizers used a 2017 pilot kit. If there really are no changes, then at least change the year on cover sheet to indicate that there have been no changes.
Procedures specific to the contest site (example: where you can and cannot drive on the ramp). Landing cards.
Provide printed copies on request.
Radio Frequencies for all airports in contest area plus pass D altitudes. Preferably in a note card for ready reference in cockpit
Social events/calendar. Pilot/crew name phone ID list.
Task Area Maps with Turnpoints Airfield Drawing and Traffic Pattern Recommendations
Task sheets.
The contest schedule
The daily task, grid sheet, and schedule for the week are actually sheets of paper I use. For the rest, electronic is fine. Figuring out a way to always make a colored, laminated area map with waypoints and airspace stuff available would be nice.
The only item I would like to see in paper form is the useful reduced-size excerpt from the sectional chart for the contest area. Having that in the cockpit is valuable. The rest can be sent my email. It presented on problem for me at contests this year to get the kit by email.
This is 2019, what are paper copies? ;-)
To reduce costs for organizers only electronic. If contestant wants printed do it themself or have a "printed packet fee.
Turn point lists or any map showing turnpoint layout of the task area.
Turn points and grid sheets
Turnpoint lists, especially disallowed and airport bonus available.
Turnpoint map
Turnpoint map, a decent one, not the stupid thing off the turnpoint exchange
Turnpoints
Why not let pilots who want anything on paper ask for the specific items they want? OTOH, I'd like to be able to get documents electronically without having to sign up for "social media". Email attachments and real web pages (not Facebook!) are OK.
a map of the task area site rules, eg entering the airport
map
no comment
nothing
only those items we cant submit electronically.
• Contest Procedures • Airports that require additional descriptions for safety or are not allowed airport landing bonus • Parking/Airport diagrams

14.3

Comments on Contest Registration/Organization.

13.1 - Modify words of safety motor start to be 'anywhere' but "before the first Start'.
14.1: Clarify to add fee ONLY if paying electronically.
Add staff names to info. Section under Contest on website. May have to fill in blanks as spots fill during the pre-contest time period.

Allow our electronic registration to suffice rather than require paper. Allow electronic signatures.

Allow registration fees to be paid by bank transfer (organisers specify their data, as in IGC contests). Do not mandate just one platform, like PayPal.

Chuck Lohre at CCSC did a great job in 2019

Do away with sanction fee rebates for pilots who have been CD’s, CM’s, and Scorer’s. Too hard to determine who’s eligible and pilots often say they will pay anyway. Simplify the registration procedures, just do away with rebate.

Electronic means of payment should have been implemented long ago.

For my part -- I salute those willing to take on this job so the rest of us can enjoy the contest. I have found that most contest organizers, managers and CD’s work hard to provide efficient and safe events which are also fun. I hope this attitude continues well into the future.

Generally good.

God Bless our organizers!

I don't see any reason that PayPay fees cannot be absorbed in the sanction fee. Docusign is available at a deep discount to non-profits and should be used to streamline waiver signatures.

I would like to see a shift towards shorter pilot briefings. There is no reason to have every pilot briefing last 45-60 minutes, especially on a day when the day is canceled! I would also like to see task sheets handed out during pilot briefings (preferably before the weather briefing). This allows pilots to better understand weather and safety considerations for a task if these are discussed at the briefing.

IS PAY PAL MORE THAN THE COST OF A STAMP?

If a large penalty is possible during a specific task, the airspace, rule, or cause of that penalty should be given on the task sheet.

It’s clearly a lot of work to run a contest. I'm grateful to the people who undertake the task. Whatever the SSA can do to support this activity and help them would be valuable.

Just take credit cards during online registration- like the rest of the world!

Make it as easy and lean as you can.

No comment it all works well for me Thank you to all who work to put these events on!

No comment.

None

Require a 5-tow deposit at the closeout date. Non refundable. We need tow pilots and this would insure that they will be paid for at least 5 tows

Shuffling and tracking paper copies of contest registration forms is one of the bigger pain-in-the-butt tasks for a CM (having served as one repeatedly over the last decade). I typically try to keep all copies of documents (such as pilot license images, insurance cover-sheets, etc) in an electronic format and only print them out when they need to be sent in to the SSA after the contest. If it was possible to handle all of this 100% online via the SSA / contest-management website that would be fantastic!

Thank god we still have managers and directors willing to take on these contests.

The SSA desperately needs a new website. The "Contest" section ought to have registration functions that allow pilots to make payment and change their registration status (i.e., aircraft, class, team status, crew, etc). The site should also allow racers and contest staff to blog, upload or embed videos or other content, link to social media, etc. The site needs to be designed by professionals who've had a chance to consult with younger (under 50) contest pilots, Juniors, and the SSA's GRC and digital media working group.

The SSA has the ability to process payments through the website. There is no additional fee to purchase merchandise or pay for membership through the SSA website. Why can't we process contest entries through the website instead of paying fees to PayPal?

The communication app "WhatsApp" should be highly encouraged but not required. Advertise to participants months in advance that it will be used at the contest. This gives participants time to acquire the app and learn how to use it. Pre-contest communications can be sent on WhatsApp as part of the testing and learning process. Continued in next block 15.1....

There are other payment platforms (Zelle) that do not charge a fee. We should be using some of those.

We would all benefit from a consistent system that allows organizers to use text messages or similar technology to contact all pilots about meetings, tasks, etc. I've heard organizers say they do not have the expertise, and that it is a lot of work to copy all the phone numbers from applications into a list they can use from their phone. I suggest that SSA automate this for iPhone and Android so organizers don’t have to do this themselves.

What ever makes it easier on the Event organizers

Zelle would be a better electronic registration application. It’s from bank account to bank account with no additional fee. It’s easy to set up (minutes) and works with most banks. If not your bank, them use Ebay. Zelle is the way to go.

Comment on issues you would like the rules committee to consider at the 2019 meeting?
...continued from 14.3. Many contests have used WhatsApp successfully to distribute tasks, task updates, task related information, weather charts, weather updates and other contest information. It helps communicate changes, reminders and task sheets quickly, efficiently and accurately: better than verbal, faster than paper and in color. A cell connection can be used or wifi. Can be installed on tablets, notebook computers and desktops. Group participants can be easily added and removed. You can mute notifications.

1. Some CDs sometimes ask late launches if they feel they got a fair start, and if not, hold up the task opening. This can make a big difference in contest outcomes. I am not advocating to allow or disallow this, but would like to see standardization on this procedure, both across contests and during a contest (e.g. is it fair for the CD to only ask the late laucher if they feel they have a fair start if the CD feels that pilot is a "contender" for winning or should all pilots get this opportunity? After you decide, please put the answer into the rules). 2. In addition to all the existing reasons for for cancelling a task, for safety reasons, tasks should never be opened if a CONVETIVE SIGMET exists for any REQUIRED part of the task at the task start time. The AWC issues these for conditions "hazardous to all categories of aircraft". That includes gliders. This should not be a burden for the CD as they really should be checking for SIGMETS anyway, and it is easy to get a graphical representation of current convective SIGMETs on a phone or computer. Task advisors and the weatherman may have their current idea of a "safe task" colored by pressures such as having enough days for a valid contest, or even a chance to improve their own scores after a bad day, while the professional AWC forecasters have only safety in mind. My impression, having circled in poor lift while listening to task advisors trying to decide whether to cancel due to thunderstorms in the area, is that objective criteria for an outer limit would be a relief to many. 3. Task changes after take-off are a safety hazard. Heads down time to reprogram tasks, particularly with minutes or less till task start time (as currently allowed by 10.2.4.4), creates a collision hazard. Possible steps to mitigate this danger include: (a) Strongly discourage after-launch task changes (b) Strongly encourage CDs to have a system to use text messages or similar technology for task changes. I've seen this work at several contests. Copying changes from a text message is much easier than scribbling possibly misunderstood notes. (c) Disallow task changes (including task start time) within 10 minutes of task opening time. (d) Disallow task changes after take-off completely, like the FAI rules so many people want to adopt. But please do something for safety's sake.

10.2 So it's assumed we are transitioning to FAI rules, independent of pilot poll responses? 13.1 MG rules must ensure that MG pilots can't use engine test or re-launch as an excuse to: - Save themselves from an outlanding near home - Avoid the need to return near home if conditions are weak IOW, no pre-start tactical advantages than non-MG pilots don't have. 13.2 Rule specifies engine start within 3mi - does not impose penalty for "staying outside of the 3mi limit during an engine test".

Add a poll question next year seeking recommendations on how the sanction refund money should be used.

Add the Kestrel to the Club Class list. It's stupid to exclude gliders in Club Class given the current US Club Class philosophy. It feels odd and arbitrary to include certain gliders and exclude others... if we want to be "pure" to the FAI list, then exclude the LS8s and Discus2s!!!! The Kestrel participating gives me way less heartburn than Standard Class ships being able to make it around on days the low end of the handicap list have no chance to complete the task! But if you want to broaden the class to allow for greater participation (a very reasonable objective), then simply allow an entire handicap range to enter. Define this range from an ASW15, up through say the LS6 and just let anything in between participate. And let the poor Kestrel compete for crying out loud!

Adjust standard class handicaps to accommodate older standard class ships (cirrus, asw 19, libelle, dg100...) to encourage competitive competition for younger pilots. Right now, an ls4 or discus is the barrier to entry for standard class.

After seeing a rather dishartening argument on the field at a Nationals concerning who should be most responsive to incoming task finishes (the finishing pilot or the pilot in the pattern) I think the finish area needs to be placed where landing pilots can focus on the landing pattern without fear of being run over by a fast finishing glider who is not paying attention to the landing traffic. This could be at one end of the finish runway or even a short .5 mile distance from the landing field. It's ridiculous to have to be watching who's in the pattern while trying to keep aware of whose flying to the finish at red line. Lets face it, we are in general older than pilots in most other countries. We need some space!

Allow 10 gallons of water ballast for non motor gliders to even the wing loading advantage of motor gliders.

Allowing more forms of communications between pilots at Regionals, e.g., GliderLink.

As a CD and CM, as well as a regular contestant at National championships, I urge the Rules Committee to keep a sense of perspective about what the mission of the SSA is, what the intent of the US Nationals are, and what serves the bulk of contest pilots and volunteers the best - NOT just the top pilots who are fanaticl about how they'd do at a WGC event.

Consider adding the California Grand Prix as an acceptable task for regional contests.

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Contest ID: in this day and age, it's the logger ID being correct and unique that's important. The actual tail letters don't matter. No more need to have a rule for changing tail lettering onsite. Those that show up with duplicate tail letters work it out ahead of time and radio calls are clearly done with the unique logger ID when needed. It's the logger that matters to your score. Please consider modifying the rule to get up to date with current technology and your own processes for flying at contests (valid logger file with radio calls are clearly done with the unique logger ID when needed. It's the logger that matters to your score. Please consider modifying the rule to get up to date with current technology and your own processes for flying at contests (valid logger file with unique ID's). Determine ways to encourage R12 to have a contest... please. Anything you can do will be a positive influence.

Currently 15, 18 and standard class are non handicapped. No water ballast contests are becoming more common. It is possible to have two or more pounds wingloading difference depending on the weight of the pilot and whether they carry an engine. In such instances, consider handicapping or weight capping to create a more level playing field in these "one of a kind" categories.

Discus 2, ASW-28, and LS-8 have a contest where they belong, and that is not in the club class. It is time to make the club class a true club class and let the high performance ships perform where they are designed to perform. If you cant fly a Discus 2B in the Club Class World Glider Championship, why are we allowed to qualify using one? The score sheet in Yoder would make the answer into the rules).

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Consider the 2019 Club Class Contest Day 2, where no glider finished unless it was an SZD-55 or better. It is time for the Discus 2's and LS-8's to go back to the Standard Class contests so that tasks can be properly called for the given performance range.

Don't change to FAI rules please. Only a very tiny fraction would benefit and the added danger and BS is not worth it to me, a mid level, goes to these things just for fun, type of guy. Thanks guys for working on this!! Fly Safe

Eliminate the rules pertaining to engine starts for a contest. Do not require them. (You didn't have that as an option on 13.3.) In 1.1, Open class was not an option, or I would have selected that one. I will send more in after being alerted to their importance by the experts on RAS.
Engine test run... hmmm, looks like a weak day, 2 guys have landed back. Looks like a good time to test my engine. Put-put, put-put, put, put-put, wonder if there's lift under that Cu over there? Put-put, put-put, put-put, YES there is! Engine test run complete! I have seen them driving around under partial power, looking for a good thermal.

Engine test. How is this different from a self-relight? You're allowed to "relight" which is a climb to tow altitude. I didn't look, I think we got rid of the limitation on number of relights, which is the only reason to treat a relight different from an engine test. So, unlike engine tests and relights: start your engine any time you want within 3 miles of the airport or within the start cylinder, climb to no more than low release + 500', and you can't start for 15 (or was it 20) minutes. PS, talk to motor pilots. Now that I have a motor I see all the worrying about this stuff on the ground over the winter by non motor pilots is really misplaced energy. I flew Truckee and did the regional handicapped Grand Prix. This is excellent. We will forward a separate proposal to allow this in regionals.

There are two parts: bring back the "last start time" option, and allow turn area tasks with glider-specific legs. Each is independent.

Getting rid of the block font requirement is fine, but contest numbers should be readable. I do not have block font, but I have asked multiple people and they can clearly read my number. There are however some high ranking pilots that have block, but in light grey that is not readable at any distance. This should be corrected.

Have more influence on the site selection process so all the work on FAI rules isn't wasted.

I already forwarded a proposal to address a problem we faced at Caesar Creek: i.e., in Standard Class, we had an official contest with 8 contestants, all of whom had at least 40% of the winner's score after 4 days. But we faced the possibility that by continuing to fly, we might lose that official status if one pilot dropped below 40%. That seemed assured when he suffered damage and had to drop out. Fortunately (?!), the last two days were weathered out. My proposal says, in essence, that once you hit the magic numbers for an official contest, you can't lose it. There should not be a disincentive to keep flying and competing if we've already satisfied the rules designed to prevent "phantom" entries just to fill out the field. I hope this will receive consideration. It's difficult enough to get enough pilots together for a nationals in some classes at some sites without having to worry about a contest meeting the minimum requirements and then backtracking after being there a week or so.

I am looking forward to flying US contests under FAI rules!

I think an option to fit national contests from weekend to weekend should be allowed (including travel/practice). It's hard to take 2 weeks of work given the limited vacation times these days. I see to much of a "retired" majority of folks at nationals. We need to figure out how to encourage younger in their career pilots to attend contests.

I think motor gliders have an inherent advantage. No bonus should be given for an airport landing unless the glider lands without starting the engine...

I think the move to FAI rules is nuts. But it also appears that boat has sailed. I hope the Rules committee will holdout against the effort to dilute the low finish rule.

I want to thank the Rules Committee for all the work they put into making US contests safe, fun, and fair.

I would like to see the Open Cirrus and Kestrel and other early 17-Meter single-place ships get added to the list of Club Class ships. Phil Chidekel's comments this summer re: the list of ships approved for Club Class were spot on and it's a shame a people fly these ships have no class they can compete to make the US Team. I would also like to see the SSA adopt a CD training program where applicants can apply to be an Assistant CD at a regional or national contest. Assistant CM's could assist CM's with their duties as well, before, during, and after a contest. MAT tasks are dangerous and should be eliminated from the rules. Moreover, they are not racing. AT and TAT should be equally assigned with TAT being reserved for days where conditions are less certain, or for regional contests where the field of competition in sports or club class includes a number of beginners.

If pilot communications air to air and ground to air becomes common, more needs to be defined on use of communications using VHF 123.3. Examples of issues: 1) If pilot to pilot comms is allowed on 123.3... let CD determine excessive use?... or prohibit it 2) All communications air-air, ground-air must be outside VHF 123.3 3) Leave all air-air and ground-air comms to be determined by pilot/team using it using legal FCC channels or commercial services.

If standard and 15m are combined we need much more sophisticated handicapping.

If the US is going to try FAI rules for a year, perhaps some other countries could try US rules for a year?

Increasing participation. It seems to me that the number of contest entrants has been stagnant for the past 5 to 10 years. Thanks to the rules committee members past and present for their time and effort.

Keep up the good work, and thanks for all you do!

Like it or not there is a psychological/tactical advantage to having an FES or a motor in a glider. A glider pilot with a motor has a significant advantage when it comes to flying low over tiger country or low and just below final glide to a turn point or a finish over a pilot with a conventional glider. The risk is just too high. The glider pilot with the motor will extend his glide toward his goal knowing that once he descends to a certain altitude he can fire up the motor and fly home. This is a considerable advantage over a glider pilot without a motor. I think the rules committee must start to explore was making a more level playing field between motorized and conventional buyers.

Move to FAI smoothly. No reason to have multiple rule sets. All adjustments can be made through local procedures. Combine Standard and 15 Meter with handicaps for a larger FAI class. Allow single seaters that fall inside the handicap range of club class to fly Club class even if they have longer wingspans (ex. Kestrel 17, Open Cirrus). FAI Club Class does allow spans greater than 15 meter such as the Cirrus B with 16 meter wingspan.

No motor gliders in club class. Scrap FLARM replace with ADS-B. FLARM is a mess. No discussion at contests of how it to be set up or even if it has to be always on. Installation matters. Knowledge about FLARM system is very low and no place to gain knowledge. At contests FLARM use is like the sheep grazing with the wolves

No other suggestions see comments above

No running/testing of any sailplane motors, engine, FES, or devices that propels the sailplane in a forward manner while sailplane is on or near the grid to create blowing debris, scare, or aggravate anyone. Testing elsewhere requires the pilot to have a safety person present to alert others as to the engine run and to assure others are not harmed or sailplanes blasted my the prop wash. The CD must cover this during the mandatory meeting. FP has been warned multiple times and seems to have a psychotic affliction to scaring people and blasting dirt on the grid. R
Once again, please consider my comments about eliminating the span restriction on club class gliders. There's no reason to limit contest participation when the sport is declining.

Please engage with IGC regarding our rule differences that enhance safety. If we can show that we are statistically safer, perhaps we can get them to move our way on some things.

Q 1.8,1.9,1.10 since I am not from the US, I have not been involved in SSA/US contest organization, however, I have organized and been Contest Manager for many contests at home.

Rule 3.2.2 Should include - "Pilots or pilots whose spouse has served as..." ie - a pilot planning to score has a spouse unable to get into a regional competition due to low ranking may lead to person planning to score not doing so. It is hard to get people to commit to being CM,CD or scorer - let's not jeopardize losing these people.

Rule 5.7.3.4 essentially requires the use of the DRY handicap list for BALLAST-ALLOWED competitions. This leads to many anomalies, for example a heavy pilot in an unmotorized glider and a light pilot in the motorized version of the same glider, who would have the SAME take-off dry weight and the SAME ballasting ability and the SAME all-Up ballasted weight in aerodynamically IDENTICAL gliders, to be assigned very different handicaps. After discussing the issue with several pilots, it seems like the root cause is that THE US IS THE ONLY MAJOR SOARING COUNTRY THAT DOES NOT HAVE A PROPERLY CALCULATED HANDICAP LIST FOR COMPETITIONS WHERE WATER BALLAST ARE ALLOWED. All the handicap lists we know of, such as the BGA list, the German DAeC list, the French Index Planeurs list, the Italian list, etc., all list handicaps calculated based on ballasting ability. Australia has two lists (with and without ballast), and so does the latest revised Czech list (with all the motorgliders with retractable engines and all the FES variants included). With the increasing popularity and use of combined FAI classes, where ballast is allowed, the US SSA/RC should consider generating a handicap list that is properly calculated to take into account ballast ability.

Task sheets must be printed with the diagram and weather and retrieve instructions on the first page. Maximum of two tasks. Ie primary and backup. Bailout task would be a time reduction of a TAT. No new task in the air. VERY DANGEROUS!!!

Thanks for all the hard work and everything you do to keep racing alive in the US!

You are moving forward with the clear mandate from 2018 to use FAI rules. Do not let the Nixon and Good (and others) interfere with the progress. That mindset has set us back twenty years in competitive learning.

The Kestrel 17 must be added back to the Club Class list!

The club class definition is somewhat confused. I believe it is at once too broad and too restrictive. I am sympathetic to the desire to provide a definition which increases the cross-section of pilots and aircraft that participate, but if this is the objective then simply allowing any sailplane within a defined handicap range (without regard to wingspan) to participate seems like the consistent choice. I see no rationale for permitting Discus 2s to participate but not open cirri, kestrels, dg202s, etc. Limiting club class to a specific list of aircraft to allow assigned tasking and keep the gliders more together is also a reasonable approach, but in this case we should simply use the FAI list. Creating an arbitrary U.S. club class list which is in between makes no sense to me, either let in any glider with a handicap between 0.898 and 1.02 or else restrict participation to the FAI list.

The issue of having the lowest score at 40% of the winner is difficult when combined with the minimum requirements (8 minimum and/or 5 greater than 92%). Reduce the minimum score to 20% and maybe change wording to (equal to or greater than 92%). Maybe add provision for contestants that have to leave.

Very concerned that motor gliders and pure sailplanes are being bunched up to have the same rules. They are two different types of flying. If you land out in a glider and you get a 5 hour retrieve, you are now tired for the next day of flying. The pilot that starts his engine and now gets bonus points to fly home is back and relaxed for flying.

right now we have 500-ish pilots ranked - we need more pilots ranked which should help contest participation. We need a way to get pilots trying to get ranked who can only fly as a hobby on weekends. Many working younger pilots with families become disconnected form the sport. Many pilots who do not fly contest become disconnected from the Contest pilots. We need innovation in how we do contests and how we give a pilot a rank to keep them engaged.

Responses for each text type.
Return to the 2019 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll survey form to check your input.

Return to main survey page.

If you have problems or questions contact the survey administrator.