2020 Proposed SSA Contest Rules Changes

This document contains draft text of contest rules changes recommended by the SSA Rules Committee for implementation in 2020, as the result of discussions at the annual Rules Committee meeting held in November 2019.

Recommended new wording is shown in blue. When appropriate, current wording is shown in red.

When a paragraph number is followed by a minus sign ("-"), that number is replaced by a bullet ("•") in published versions of the rules. This notation is used to denote one item in a list of similar items.

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National contest validity

5.2.1.1 Minimum number within a class for an Official competition
5.2.1.1.1 For a National competition: either eight regular entrants with a final score not less than 40% of the winner's final score, or five regular entrants with a current pilot ranking score greater than 92.0 and a final score not less than 75% of the winner's final score.

5.2.1.1 Minimum number within a class for an Official competition
5.2.1.1.1 For a National competition, either of the following must be true of the total of scores over any three valid (not necessarily consecutive) competition days:
5.2.1.1.1.1 At least eight regular entrants have a total score not less than 40% of the highest total score.
5.2.1.1.1.2 At least five regular entrants with a current pilot ranking score greater than 92.0 have a total score not less than 75% of the highest total score.

This relaxes the criteria for a valid contest such that if any three days produce sufficient results, the contest is valid and will not become invalid based on further results.

20-Meter Class handicapping

6.11.2.3 Handicapping based on relative performance will apply.

6.11.2.3 Sailplanes are assigned a handicap from the SSA Handicap List; handicaps are not adjusted for weight or configuration changes.

This treats 20-Meter Class handicaps in the same way as Standard Class handicaps: they are a fixed number, not adjusted for weight or other reasons.
Motorglider engine test

10.5.3.1.5 Any use of the engine not within three miles of the home airfield or of a location covered by the CD's self-launch procedures (Rule 10.5.3.2.1) ends a pilot's competition flying for the day.

10.5.3.4.1 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.

10.5.3.1.5 Any engine use not in conformance with Rules 10.5.3.2 - 10.5.3.4 ends a pilot's competition flying for the day.

10.5.3.4.1 Once per flight, pilots may elect to test an engine that was not used for self-launch. The engine must be started within 30 minutes of aerotow release, not below 1000 ft AGL, and before starting on task.

This change removes the 3-mile restriction on engine test and makes it clear that this must be done before task start.

No more “start out the back”

10.7.5 The distance of the first task leg shall be taken as the distance from the Start Position to the control fix at the first turnpoint.

10.7.5 The distance of the first task leg shall be taken as the lesser of:
10.7.5.1- the distance from the Start Position to the control fix at the first turnpoint
10.7.5.2- the distance from the center of the start cylinder to the control fix at the first turnpoint

This change restores the pre-2017 rule giving distance credit only from the “front half” of the start cylinder. Allowing full distance credit for starts “out the back” introduced undesirable complexity and often gave a potential disadvantage to late launchers. Note that this affects distance calculation but does not alter the rule that any exit from the start cylinder is a valid start.

Radio call when approaching finish

10.8.1.2.1 When four miles from the Finish Point, the pilot should transmit “[Contest ID] four miles.” When a finish could come from more than one direction, radio calls should include the direction from which the pilot is finishing.

10.8.1.2.1 At a distance from the Finish Point of 4 miles (or further, as specified by the CD), the pilot should transmit “[Contest ID] [distance] miles.” When a finish could come from more than one direction, radio calls should include the direction from which the pilot is finishing.

Allows the CD to specify a greater distance when this would be useful, as when the finish cylinder radius is more than one mile.
Use of FAI Tasking and Scoring in Nationals by Waiver

This waiver is for use by US National soaring contests in 2020. The purpose is to use these in a trial manner to allow US pilots to evaluate the benefits and any other effects. This is effective for Club, Standard, 15 Meter, 18 Meter, 20Meter Multi seat, and Open classes. It incorporates tasking and scoring as used in FAI/IGC World and Continental soaring championship events. Incorporation of this information in the Rules Change document is for information purposes and does not require SSA BOD approval. The waiver, in current form and appropriate support documents are in the Rules and Process section on the SSA web site.