



Soaring Surveys

2023 SSA Rules Committee Pilot Opinion Poll Results

November 3, 2023 11:20 PM

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

Analysis Categories		All
Summary of detailed data representing All respondents.		155
1.0	Demographics	All
1.1	What is your age?	97%
1.2	Are you male or female?	M 95% F 3%
1.3	In what year did you fly your first SSA Sanctioned Contest?	94%
1.4	Do you plan on flying in SSA Sanctioned Contests in 2024?	Yes 92% No 6%
1.5	What is your current work status? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently employed by a business/company. • Self employed. • Seeking employment. • Student • Retired • Other 	Business/Company 42% SelfEmployed 15% SeekingEmployment 1% Student 1% Retired 41% Other 1%
1.6	What National contests did you fly in the 2023 season? (Can select multiple contests) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Class/20M Multiseat Reedsville, PA • 15M/Open Class Nationals, Cordele, GA • 18M Nationals, Uvalde, TX • Club Class Nationals, Dansville, NY • Sports Class Nationals, Waller, TX • None 	Standard/20M 10% 15M/Open 14% 18M 10% ClubClass 7% SportsClass 12% None 61%
1.7	How many Regional contests did you fly in the 2023 season? (Select one)	0 35% 1 39% 2 17% 3 6% 4 1% 5+ 1%
1.8	Do you plan to fly in the 2024 20 Meter Multiseat National contest at Seminole-Lake Gliderport?	Yes 9% No 87%
1.9	What class of glider do you fly? Can select multiple classes:	Open 15% 18M 42% 15M 40%

		Std 27% 20MMultiseat 17% Club 31% 1-26 8%
1.10	Do you race a glider with a sustainer motor only (not self-launching)?	Yes 19% No 81%
1.11	Do you race a glider with a self-launching motor?	Yes 23% No 77%
1.12	I have access to both non-motorized gliders and motorgliders.	Yes 24% No 74%
1.13	Have you been on a ground retrieve for a fellow competitor in a contest, after starting your motor and returning to the field? Answer only if you fly a motorglider.	Yes 17% No 39%
1.14	Do you own, co-own, rent or borrow the glider you race in? Check all that apply:	Own 90% Co 12% Rent 4% Borrow 11%
1.15	Have you ever held any of the following positions during an SSA sanctioned National Championship. Check all that apply:	CD 7% CM 6% Scorer 5% Volunteer 35%
1.16	Have you ever held any of the following positions during an SSA sanctioned Regional competition. Check all that apply:	CD 17% CM 12% Scorer 10% Volunteer 46%
2.0	FLARM	All
2.1	Does the glider you typically fly in contests have a FLARM unit?	Yes 91% No 9%
2.2	Currently, a FLARM-compatible anti-collision device, (FCACD) is required equipment at all National Contests. FLARM use during regional contests should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be required. • Not be required. • Required at the direction of contest management based on site and number of contest participants. • No opinion. 	BeRequired 43% NotRequired 15% RequiredAtDiscretion 37% NoOpinion 5%
2.3	Would you rent a FLARM portable unit, if it was available, to attend a National contest?	Yes 53% No 38%
2.4	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:	MadeMandatory 11%

		OrganizerControl 28% BeForbidden 22% PilotsDiscretion 37%
2.5	Comment on allowing the use of FLARM Stealth mode.	35%
2.6	Comment on requiring the use of FLARM.	41%
3.0	Tracking	All
3.1	What type of tracking equipment is used in your glider? Select all that apply:	Spot 50% InReach 39% CellPhoneApp 11% ADS-B 41% SoftRF 3% Other 10% None 5%
3.1a	Specify Tracking Equipment if Other is selected:	11%
3.2	Have you ever watched a contest or cross-country flights using an OGN viewer?	Yes 67% No 30%
3.3	What OGN viewer did you typically use?	WeGlide 35% GlideAndSeek 15% GliderTracker 13% Flymaster - LiveTrack24 2% Other 6%
3.3a	Specify OGN Viewer if Other selected:	7%
3.4	What information did you want to see that was not displayed? Name the contest that you were watching to see if that information was available at that site.	19%
3.5	Did watching the contest on the OGN viewer help you as a crew or keep you involved in the contest as a spectator?	Yes 59% No 17%
3.6	Will you watch another contest using an OGN viewer?	Yes 68% No 12%
3.7	Please comment on your views of OGN tracking at US contests (e.g. with regard to safety/search & rescue, aid to organizers for monitoring and organizing retrieves, entertainment for ground personnel, crew, family & friends, competitive considerations, etc.).	39%
3.8	Should results on the final day be withheld until after the on-site presentation?	Yes 21% No 25% OrganizersChoice 49%
4.0	New Technology	All
4.1	What type of primary flight computer is your glider equipped with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LXNav • ClearNav • LX navigation • Oudie (any model)/See You Mobile 	LXNav 33% ClearNav 28% LX-Navigation 1%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SN-10 • XC Soar • Top Hat run on a tablet • Other 	Oudie/SeeYou 18% SN-10 5% XCSoar 4% TopHat 6% Other 4%
4.1a	Specify Flight Computer if Other selected:	8%
4.2	Can you read ground speed with your current navigation system?	Yes 97% No 3%
4.3	Can you select 0.3 sm when inputting a racing task under SSA/FAI Rules during a National contest?	Yes 84% No 6%
4.4	Attitude/Heading Reference Systems (AHRS) are showing up in numerous new devices as an option. Most of these devices can disable this function. Which statement best represents your view with respect to permitting enabling of AHRS functionality during contests? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AHRS is safety equipment and should be allowed during contests. • AHRS tempts pilots to fly in clouds and should be restricted from use during contests. 	Allowed 45% Restricted 51%
4.5	Does your glider have an electronic artificial horizon, Turn and Bank or other software feature enabled that provides attitude information when not in competition?	Yes 33% No 66%
4.6	Specify the device that displays artificial horizon if you have one (ie. LXNav S100, LX-90XX etc).	36%
4.7	Did you use an artificial horizon this soaring season (not during a contest) to avoid a potentially hazardous situation (inadvertent cloud penetration, stuck on top of cloud deck during wave flying, low visibility conditions due to smoke/haze etc.)?	Yes 6% No 92%
4.8	Have you practiced using an artificial horizon under simulated instrument conditions within the past two years?	Yes 26% No 73%
4.9	Is your glider equipped with a transponder?	Yes 70% No 29%
4.10	Is your glider equipped with ADS-B Out?	Yes 48% No 50%
4.11	Do you intend to equip your glider with ADS-B Out within the next 2 years?	Yes 20% No 45%
4.12	If a new technology is legally available for use in gliders, should the Rules Committee consider the practicality of enforcement as a major factor in deciding whether to restrict its use?	Yes 75% No 15%
4.13	Current rules prohibit ground to air and air to air data transfer except for ADS-R transmissions. Do you still support this?	Yes 65% No 28%
4.14	Do you have a Cambridge Model 10/20 that you use as a primary or backup flight logger in contests?	Yes-Primary -

		Yes-Backup 5% No 92%
4.15	<p>We currently allow first-generation flight recorders (Cambridge Model 10/20's etc.) to be used during contests if the competitor brings the software and cables to support secure data transfer to the scorer. This sometimes puts a strain on the scorers. Legacy recorders for contest flight logs should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the recorder is on the list of approved IGC recorders, still allow their use. Allow their use for the 2024 season and remove them in 2025. Remove legacy flight recorders now. No opinion 	StillAllowUse 39% Allow2024Remove2025 14% RemoveNow 16% NoOpinion 30%
4.16	Please comment on any available technology that you would like to be allowed by the contest rules.	15%
5.0	Communications	All
5.1	<p>Air to air communication during contests has been a discussion point for many years. Team flying, with radio communication, is currently against the rules during National contests but not in Regionals. Should we allow air-air communication during Nationals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep current restrictions. No air-to-air communication except for safety transmissions. Allow radio communication/team flying between all competitors on one frequency. Allow team flying with air-to-air communication on separate frequencies. These pilots must have radios that can receive on two frequencies and transmit on one. Other (please explain your idea) 	KeepCurrent 49% AllowAll 17% AllowTeams 25% Other 5%
5.1a	Expalin your idea if Other selected:	19%
6.0	Airspace	All
6.1	<p>Currently, turn areas may contain closed airspace during a task. These conflicts are covered at the pilots meeting or on the task sheet as a note. Most flight computers can display pie shaped areas to eliminate the closed airspace from the turn area. Turn areas with closed airspace within it should be displayed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a circle with proper notification to the pilots of the conflicts in the turn area. Allow a different shape turn area vice the standard circle to ensure closed airspace is outside of turn area. Turn area radius should be drawn to avoid closed airspace. No opinion 	CircleWithNotification 45% DifferentShape 17% AvoidClosed 17% NoOpinion 19%
6.2	<p>Class C airspace and the airspace above it is considered closed during contests, incurring a major airspace penalty if a pilot enters that airspace. The FARs do allow pilots to enter this airspace if radio communication and permission to enter the airspace is established prior to entering Class C airspace. The FARs also allow pilots to overfly Class C airspace below 10,000 feet without radio communication if their glider is ADS-B Out equipped. How should we handle Class C Airspace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class C airspace (including the airspace above it) should not incur a major airspace penalty if the pilot follows proper procedure for entering the airspace. Only applies if the pilot lands at the airport inside this airspace. Class C airspace is closed. Keep rule as written now. Class C airspace (including the airspace above it) should not incur a major airspace penalty if the pilot follows proper procedure for entering the airspace. The pilot does not have to land at the airport inside this airspace. Class C airspace is closed but the airspace above the ceiling can be transited. 	ApplyIfLands 20% KeepCurrent 46% NoMajorPenalty 19% TransitAboveAllowed 14%
6.3	<p>Major airspace penalties during an official practice day are applied to the contest score sheet. In the US, on the first day of the contest you would be starting with -100 points. The rationale is that penalties for practice day airspace violations are ineffective as deterrents if they are erased on the first contest day. Should major airspace penalties incurred on a practice day carry over to the first contest day?</p>	Yes 50% No 48%
6.4	<p>Should a contest flight log, with an airspace violation on it, be allowed to be withdrawn by the pilot? Flight will be penalized as "no flight log turned in". Flight will not appear on any contest/SSA webpage.</p>	Yes 65% No 32%
7.0	SSA/FAI Rules for National Contests	All

	Over the last six years, we have made a transition to the rules for US National contests. Beginning in 2021, National Contests were conducted using modifications to FAI rules on a trial basis modified with Local Procedures. These changes only affected the “Task Definition” and “Scoring Formula” from Section 3, Annex A, FAI Rules for World and Continental Gliding Championships (SC3a). The main differences in these contests were the adoption of FAI Start Procedures, FAI turnpoint definition, and the use of the alternate scoring formula. Additionally, scoring was conducted using both WinScore and SeeYou to compare the differences. Scoring during these tests was identical for the two programs. Two items that were not tried in the 2021 - 2023 seasons were Pilot Event Markers (PEV) for starts and Distance Handicapped tasks.	
7.1	Did you fly a national contest or one that was run under the SSA/FAI contest rules?	Yes 57% No 40%
7.2	Tell us your experience of flying during a national contest under these rules.	46%
7.3	In the last survey, we polled what your desires would be if changes to the FAI rules occurred. The results were clear, pilots would like the changes to be incorporated into the SSA/FAI rules after being reviewed by the Rules Committee. Do you still feel that way?	Yes 78% No 10%
7.4	If you have a different way to review changes in FAI rules and adjust US rules, give us your ideas.	12%
7.5	The Pilot Event Mark (PEV) used during starts was not in the trial in 2021/2022. This type of start procedure was proposed to help reduce the issues with gagging/leeching during WGC events. The pilot is expected to select a pilot event mark before the start, wait a specific period before you can start, and then you have another period that a start can be made. Do you think leeching/gagging is a significant enough problem in the US that PEV procedures should be a part of starts for US Nationals?	Yes 19% No 69%
7.6	Regionals use the same scoring program we have had for many years. Alternative FAI scoring has, among other features, a higher maximum possible score of 750 points in the event of a landout, reducing the score impact of a single bad day. During National contests, pilots seem to favor the new SSA/FAI scoring program. Should we trial the alternative scoring program during a regional?	Yes 75% No 16%
7.7	National contests use a Assigned Task turnpoint radius of .3mi with no credit for additional distance. Would you like to trial this at a regional?	Yes 62% No 28%
7.8	PEV starts should generally be used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only in Nationals. • Leave it up to the organizers. • Never • No opinion 	OnlyInNationals 12% UpToOrganizers 37% Never 30% NoOpinion 15%
7.9	How should PEV starts be used in a given contest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day by day, CD option. • Constant for the entire contest. • Used in a or b above but with no penalty if it is not used by the pilot. • No opinion 	DayByDay 21% Constant 26% AorB 12% NoOpinion 32%
7.10	Energy Controlled Start - Although written as mandatory in the 2024 season Annex A, there has been a lot of pushbacks by international organizers. It may become optional or go away entirely. If the Energy Controlled Start becomes optional, how should it be used in general in the US: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always • Day by day, CD option • Consistent for the entire contest • Determined by the organizer before the contest. • Never 	Always 13% DayByDay 10% Consistent 19% OrganizerDetermined 25% Never 20%
7.11	During rules input meetings, some of the pilots expressed issues with the “no valid start” penalty given for starts over 300ft above maximum start altitude. The 300ft limit is currently in the FAI rules. Do you think this penalty is too harsh?	Yes 23% No 65%

7.12	Do you think the 6-mile start line length (3mi radius) is:	TooLong 7% TooShort 7% JustRight 75%
7.13	What would you recommend the start line to be?	21%
7.14	<p>At the 2023 Sports Class Nationals, an alternative to the MAT task was called on several days. The "Mozer TAT" is a series of Assigned Task-sized turn cylinders to simulate assigned task racing - similar to the MAT. The difference is, instead of requiring the faster pilots to fly to additional turnpoints where there have in the past been adverse weather conditions, the last one or two turnpoints are larger cylinders. This allows faster pilots to log additional distance (reflecting their higher task speed) with more flexibility to avoid bad weather at the end of the flight while enabling slower pilots to turn for home sooner to avoid being significantly over time at the end of the day. This task type also is possible to score using commercial off-the-shelf scoring software like SeeYou that is used elsewhere around the world.</p> <p>When it comes to emulating Assigned Task racing for a wide range of glider performance and pilot experience, do you find the Mozer TAT task type to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superior to the MAT. • Inferior to the MAT. • About the same as the MAT. • No opinion 	Superior 41% Inferior 3% AboutSame 15% NoOpinion 35%
7.15	What would you change in the SSA/FAI rules going forward?	25%
8.0	Contest Classes	All
8.1	The Seniors contest is treated as a Super Regional but has certain specific rules that normal regionals do not have. You must be 55 years old or older on the first contest day. Should the Seniors be established as a separate class in Rule 5.7 & 6.11 Contest Classes?	Yes 19% No 68%
8.2	<p>The Seniors attract a good number of multiplace gliders to the competition. Since we limit participation in the Seniors to pilots 55 years old or older (younger pilots can participate as a guest), multiplace crews should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both pilots in a multiplace glider be over 55 to be a regular entry. • Pilot with the highest pilot ranking points needs to be over 55 years old. • Let organizers determine all the rules for the Seniors. • No opinion 	BothOver55 18% HighestRankOver55 15% OrganizersDetermine 43% NoOpinion 19%
8.3	Considering that many pilots have limited vacation time, and allowing for travel time , what day of the week would you like a 7-day regional to start the first contest day?	Monday 18% Tuesday 3% Wednesday 1% Thursday 2% Friday 3% Saturday 8% Sunday 52%
8.4	Considering that many pilots have limited vacation time, what day of the week would you like a 10-day national to start the first contest day?	Monday 17% Tuesday 18% Wednesday 10% Thursday 7% Friday 8% Saturday 10% Sunday 12%
8.5	The CD may declare a rest day if previous contest flying has created a potential fatigue problem for pilots. What criteria do you think should be met prior to calling a rest day?	UpToOrganizer 63% AfterValidDays 12%

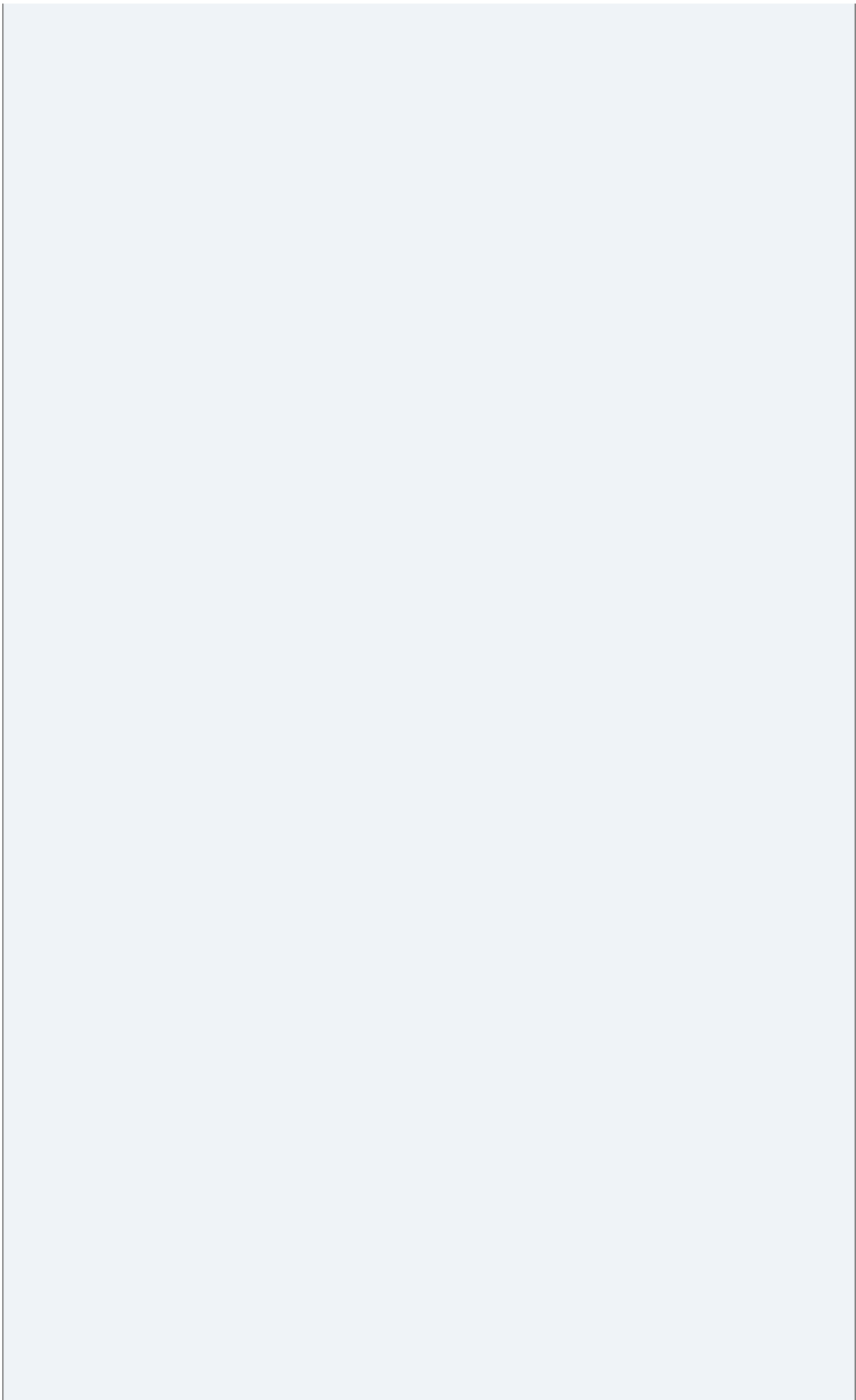
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave it up to the organizer. • Not until 4 valid contest days have been scored (nationals), or 3 for regionals. • After 20-25 hours flight time in less than 5-6 consecutive days. • After 7 flying days have elapsed. • We should not call rest days. • Other criteria. 	After20-25Hours 5% After7Days 4% ShouldNotCall 6% Other 4%
8.5a	Specify Criteria if Other is selected:	12%
8.6	Should practice days count towards the criteria for rest days? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All practice days should count. • Only official practice days. • Practice days should not count. 	AllPracticeDays 6% OfficialDays 24% NoPracticeDays 61%
8.7	Multiplace Class rules dictate a maximum gross takeoff weight of 800kg. The newer two place ships have increased their manufacturer's gross takeoff weight to 850kg. To keep the heavier multiplace ships from being excluded from participating in contests, would you increase the gross max takeoff weight to 850kg or manufacturer's certified maximum gross takeoff weight, whichever is lower?	Yes 75% No 14%
8.8	Multiplace Class ships are also limited to 750kg if an aero tow is planned. This rule from the FAI Sporting Code, Annex A, was intended to make up for the weaker tow planes found in other countries. Organizers in the US have limited disposable ballast based on tow plane availability or runway length in past contests. Should the US allow multiplace ships the ability to aero tow at weights up to 850kg, the manufacturer's certified gross takeoff weight or the weight set by the organizers for the contest, whichever is lower?	Yes 69% No 17%
8.9	From rules in section 6.11, that applies to 20M Multiseat Class, Standard Class and FAI Handicapped classes: "Sailplanes are assigned a handicap from the SSA Handicap List. Handicaps are not adjusted for weight or configuration changes." Since disposable ballast is allowed in these classes, should these rules be changed to adjust the applied handicap to the manufacturer's maximum allowed takeoff weight, or the maximum weight assigned by the organizer for the contest and any configuration changes?	Yes 57% No 25%
9.0	Summary	All
9.1	What barriers do we have to keep pilots from competing in more contests?	42%
9.2	What can the Rules Committee do to improve our support of the pilot community?	32%

Return to the [2023 SSA Rules Committee Pilot Opinion Poll survey form](#) to check your input.

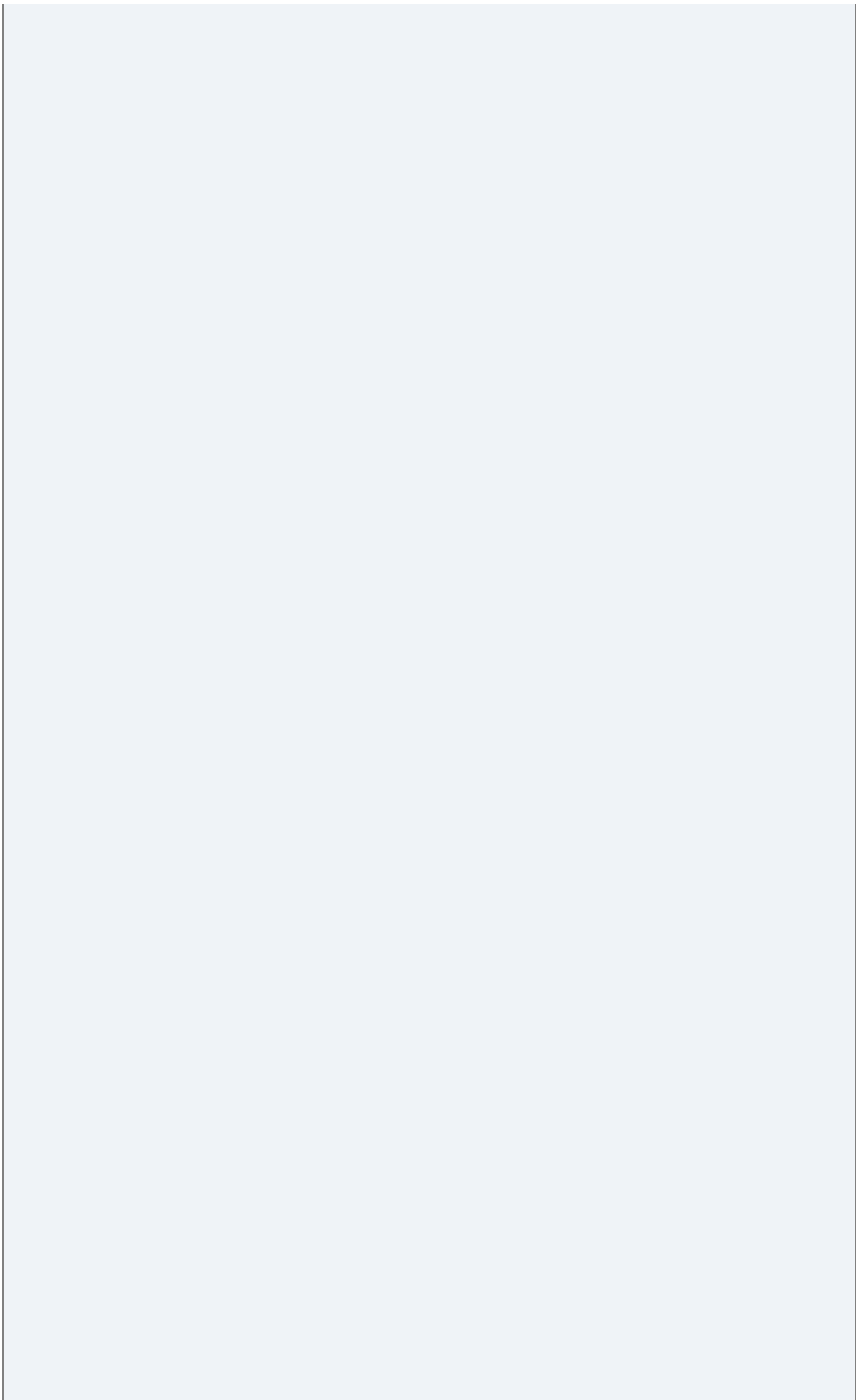
Return to main [survey page](#).

If you have problems or questions contact the [survey administrator](#).

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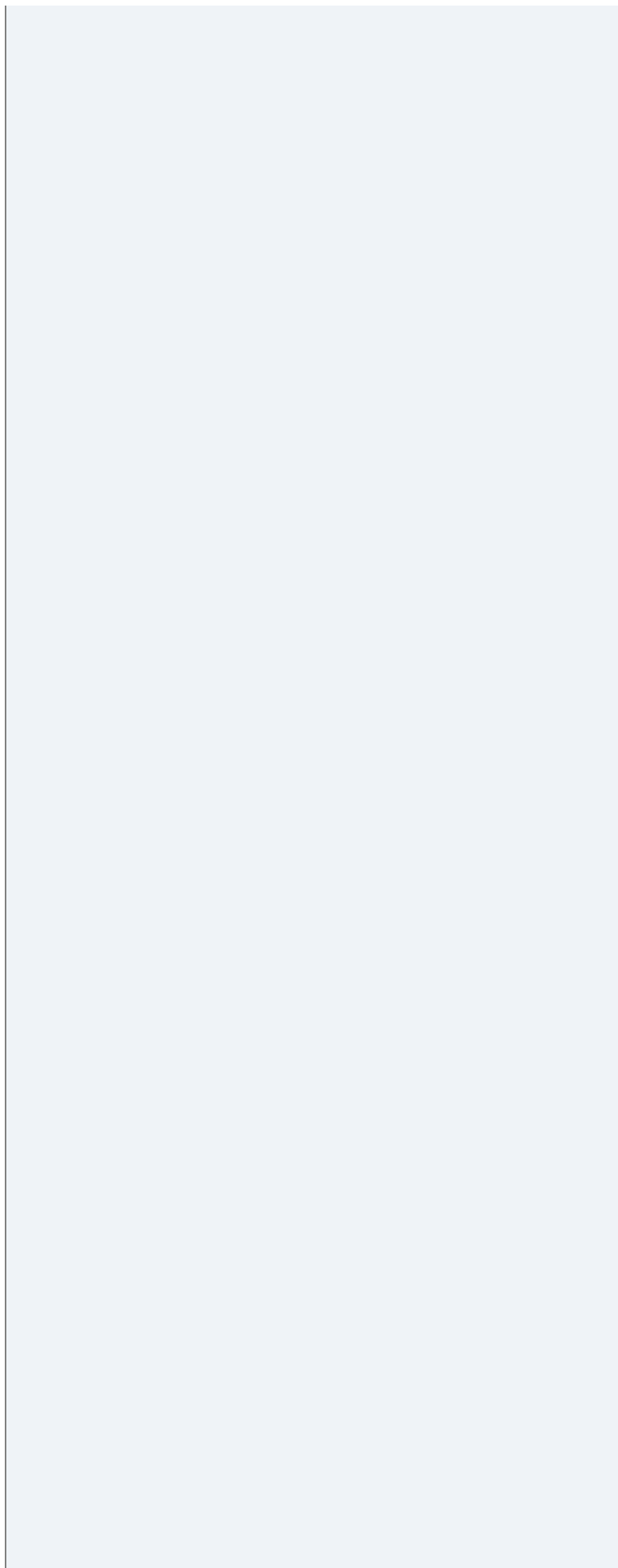


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1.3: In what year did you fly your first SSA Sanctioned Contest?

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Don't remember

June 2023

No

mentor

2.5: Comment on allowing the use of FLARM Stealth mode.

ALL pilots should be required to fly in the same mode! Preferable in Stealth

As long as the Stealth mode is mechanized the same way while using all brands of navigation displays, I think the organizers should control this decision for the first year. Then I think we should poll the pilot group again to see if they would like this to be mandatory.

By suppressing FLARM stealth mode identity is suppressed which also disables my ability to evaluate skill level of the pilot and hence decreases my ability to judge risk of flying near a pilot and what evasive maneuver I may need to take. Also, it's not really much fun for ground observers to watch tracks of a bunch of unidentified gliders racing around.

Does Stealth mode have the same collision warning distance capability as non-stealth mode? If it does, allowing pilots to decide on using stealth mode works for me. Otherwise, we should not use stealth mode. In a past discussion of this issue, Stealth Mode did not have the same distance warning capabilities as non-stealth mode.

Don't care

Don't know enough about it to comment. Processing that much information while trying to fly would be beyond my ability

FLARM is to build Situational Awareness and to increase safety. The added benefits of gaining tactical advantage from that information should be restricted if technically feasible.

Flare was originally imposed as a collision--avoidance safety measure. It has now become a must-have tactical tool that requires a lot of heads-down time; that might actually make matters worse than flying without FLARM. Disabling climb and ID info would help Flarm should be limited to collision avoidance . Tactical use is BS.

From a competitive viewpoint it should be disabled from a teaching standpoint it should be allowed since we're trying to promote and teach competitive soaring this is a difficult question to answer

Hasn't this been beaten to death already?

Have flown both ways. There's definitely a tactical advantage to FLARM without Stealth. I suspect some (many?) pilots are using Stealth now and I have mixed feelings about that. But how are we going to enforce it?

I am leaning toward Stealth Mode being forbidden

I believe FLARM should only be used for it's original intended purpose, anti-collision. For anti-collision Stealth mode is all that is necessary.

I don't have any experience with using it. Personally, I often turn my Flarm radar off (in XCSoar) and just use my led Flarm display for warnings. I find trying to follow other's Flarm distracting. I'd rather spend my time reading the sky. It is tempting when it is there.

I don't like it much and would be less likely to attend contests requiring it. Requiring it seems to indicate a highly competitive atmosphere that I try to avoid.

I find trying to use Flarm targets, as most competitors do to strategize and gain advantage, a distraction from my flying. I wish we were not forced to use it to gain advantage, but I do appreciate the increased safety it provides.

I have not tried stealth mode, but I've read it is too restrictive as close targets cannot be seen for situational awareness. I do like the idea of stealth mode and would prefer to fly looking out the window vs looking inside to see what other gliders are doing. If stealth mode is actually not compromising safety, then I'm all for it.

I know racing in the US is not a team sport and collaboration is discouraged but on weak days let's just share and get home. Safer is better.

I think it should be all or nothing on stealth mode at the CD's discretion.

I would likely not use it, but I can understand other pilots wanting it. Short term, a pilot can use a FLARM ID different than their own which works for a few days until people figure out which ID goes to which ship.

I would prefer a contest mode that limits available information but FLARM will not provide this

If FLARM Stealth is made mandatory simply to limit the tactical usage, you still have the problem of OGN tracks (which show climb rate/ID) obtainable on any number of devices with cell reception. Phone apps, SeeYou N overlay, etc... This assumes that the contest is using OGN for tracking and requiring contestants to register on OGN to be seen, which is the way things are headed.

If your glider has a transponder with ADS-b out your data could still be visible to other competitors. This would encourage some racers to not install or not use a transponder since it would put them at a disadvantage tactically.

It may be handy for the organizers if there is a dispute to have.

It should be all or nothing if safety is the concern. To be at pilots discretion only adds confusion to who I'm seeing in the thermal and if my unit is working correctly.

Mandatory . FLARM for Collision warnings only.

My understanding is that it reduces time to collision alert

No opinion

No strong feelings. Blocking contest ID does decrease situational awareness--harder to keep track of whether the glider you're tracking visually is the same one you're being alerted to.

Not a level playing field. Not all FLARM's display this info and when you see competitors make a 90 degree turn from course line to join gliders 1 or 2 miles away in a strong climb I don't feel it's in keeping with the spirit of racing. Too much gadgetry. Might as well be racing on Condor simulator.

Not required

Not requiring Stealth Mode favors expensive displays and disadvantages entry level pilots.

Quibbling over Stealth Mode takes energy and time away from more important issues, such as growing the sport and finding ways to encourage greater contest participation. The more minutes and tripmines we set, the fewer participants we will have.

Safety is the number #1 priority. Just like any sport, if you change the rules for safety, the participants will learn how to play within the confines of the new rules and also learn how to use the rules to their advantage. It's just changing how the game is played and should FLARM (NO Stealth Mode) should always be used.

Several ships at the 18M Nationals appeared to have poorly if at all operating Flarms.

Should be either Made Mandatory or be forbidden.

Soaring, including contest flying, has a serious problem of attracting enough people for the sport to remain viable. Given that most pilots are, by definition, "average", Flarm performance data can be helpful to us average pilots. If more average people enjoy the experience of contest flying they'll tell their friends, and encourage more. This is a small sacrifice that the top pilots should consider making for health of the sport.

Stealth mode inhibits live tracking which is detrimental to safety for SAR

Stealth mode is an excellent idea. However, keeping the contest ID I believe is paramount because if a reckless pilot encroaches on my thermal I want to know if I can stay or if I need to leave.

Stealth mode needs to be mandatory, it is otherwise ruining the sport!

Stealth mode restricts the Flarm display distance to collision-threat only. A better option is Competition mode which shows targets at a greater distance but drops the ID and climb rate info.

The level of the competition should determine the requirement for FLARM Stealth mode. Regional and below, Stealth mode not required; National and above, required.

The manufacturer recommends against use of the stealth mode for safety reasons. I agree. I would trade the tactical advantage that some pilots get from being able to see other pilots for the enhanced safety.

There seems to be some misunderstanding of the level of degraded capabilities under stealth. My understanding based on a careful read of the documentation circa 2015/16 is that there is no loss of collision avoidance capability. It would be nice if we could get a rational discussion of this topic with the manufacturer without including "legal" or "liability" concerns in the initial pass. Similarly, let's not start with "situational awareness". What are the facts in terms of reduction in range of alerts etc.

This should not be a leeching contest. FLARM for safety only.

Turning this sport into a spectator event will require the use of flarm data and the OGN. Stealth mode should go away.

Use of FLARM following during contests enables pilots with lesser skills to follow the more talented pilots and dilutes the meaning of the scored result.

Use of Stealth Mode or any method that totally eliminates any and all tactical information should be made mandatory in all competitions.

We should copy the Annex A rule: FLARM may be configured any way the pilot chooses, as long as the collision avoidance function is not disabled.

Well, at the end of the day I believe the people who want the Info will be able to get it. May as well make it public so we're all on the same page. Plus it makes much better viewership for the public watching online

What do other countries do? What does International Competitions do? We probably should conform to international norms on this subject. In the meantime, I checked "Organizer Control" for 2.4.

Yes, I would like FAI rules.

You forgot to mention that pilots using stealth also don't see others information, which may skew responses. KISS please! Rules that aren't enforced are not good, and rules that require lots of extra work by scorers aren't great either.

i agree this will disable " electronic leaching"

2.6: Comment on requiring the use of FLARM.

Any increase in safety is a plus.

At this point I can't see any reason that it should not be mandatory.

Basic safety. Let's see where we all are so we don't hit each other please

FLARM is a useful safety enhancement.

FLARM is an invaluable safety tool. The only reason not to make it mandatory at all events is cost. Keeping costs down is important for getting new pilots to try contests, so there is a legitimate argument for keeping FLARM optional at small, regional-type events. Rental programs are great, but we would need something like official "near-free" availability of FLARM equipment for first-time competitors in order to make FLARM mandatory at all events and avoid it being a barrier-to-entry for new participants.

FLARM is helpful but if relied on too heavily, builds bad habit patterns for visual clearing

FLARM is the way the Europeans fly. To ignore it to be different would be to accept defeat in any and all international competitions.

FLARM should be a safety tool and not a tactical following tool and team flying tool as it is now.

Flarm and/Or ADS-B mandatory

Flarm has become a negative factor in competitive soaring by enabling increased leeching and gagging, but is also a positive factor for situational awareness and collision avoidance. The rules should do more to not enable leeching and gagging in order to offset Flarm's negative effects.

Flarm is a critical safety system for glider pilots. Its use is widespread enough that it should be mandatory at all levels of competition. Those who avoid equipping their ships with flarm are putting themselves and those they fly with at much greater risk of mid air collisions.

Flarm is an important safety device for contests. Buy one if you want to race or borrow/rent one if you don't want to buy it.

For regionals, I would support requiring either Flarm or compatible SoftRF devices. Most of the time the value of Flarm is in knowing when somebody is near, not just the last minute Flarm warning (bells and whistles), SoftRF devices show up on all Flarm tracking displays and therefore add to situational awareness, they show up on OGN, and they are inexpensive. The cost of Flarm is a barrier to entry for some.

Glider pilots tend to use the same energy lines as other gliders. Gliders are also nearly impossible to see front-on. These facts materially increase the risk of mid-air collision. The worst case is cruising under a cloud street or convergence line on reciprocal courses. Closing speed is in excess of 200 knots. Flarm (particularly Flarm + ADS-B Out) helps cut risk of midair by increasing each pilot's situational awareness and ability to take evasive action. Not exploiting this technology is just stupid. In fact, if Flarm were not mandatory at a mountain soaring location (e.g. Nephi) I would probably avoid it for this reason alone.

Good idea

I do think FLARM should be required, but I also don't want a first-time contest pilot to be discouraged from attending because he/she doesn't have a FLARM. If you decide to make FLARM required at regionals, maybe you could have a waiver for a pilot's first 1-3 contests or maybe the first year. Also, there should be a waiver if your FLARM is not working. (This may have to be at CD's discretion. You probably want everyone to have one at a ridge location) My experience is FLARM isn't super reliable. I would hate to travel all the way across the country then not be able to fly because my FLARM was not working.

I feel it helps keep track of threats particularly in the start cylinder.

I find in contests where not all have flarm that there have been some close calls that flarm would have avoided

I fly only in the 1-26 contest. A FLARM would probably cost more than my entire aircraft and trailer. Requiring one would eliminate me from the competition.

I have flown many contests with FLARM I don't think it is that useful as an anti collision device.

I have flown with FLARM since it was introduced and would be unlikely to fly a contest that does not require FLARM

I have found it extremely beneficial. Able to see others more easily if they are FLARM equipped.

I have seen safety value at a few contests, in particular was a ridge head on with a low sun behind the other glider. I never "eyeballed" him until we would have hit. The issue was he had "ridge right of way" so was not obligated to move. Hopefully he would have.

I recognize that some pilots think it is an unfair imposition to ask them to pay for equipment they don't believe that they need, and others object that it gives an unfair advantage to be able to see other nearby gliders. I think the safety benefits of Flarm clearly trump those arguments. Racing is supposed to be something we do because it is fun. Unfortunately, it also has a non-negligible danger associated with it. That danger can be significantly reduced, as related to mid-air collisions, by requiring use of Flarm. Ergo, I do favor mandatory use of Flarm at all contests.

I would like to see all contests require a Flarm. The SoftRF devices should be allowed as well. They may be less reliable but I think good enough. Flarms are not 100% anyways. This year during a regional, my foot caught my Flarm's antenna cabling and broke it. So I flew the whole task without it. There are all sorts of other ways these things can fail. But it is a good start to have them.

I would not miss it

I'm as cost-conscious as anyone, maybe more so. I borrowed a FLARM when it was mandated at Elmira 2015--and bought it immediately thereafter and haven't flown without it since then. It's not perfect, but it's saved my butt more than once. I don't rely on it to the exclusion of see-and-avoid but I'm nervous in contests where it isn't mandatory and would strongly support it at the Regional as well as National level.

If portables are available to rent then it should be mandatory for regional as well! It works, it's not perfect but it works!

If required, I think a few rental units should be available or even provided for first time contestants or even second or third time contestants

Increased safety is the primary objective.

It should be required.

It should only be required in nationals. Requiring it in regionals would put one more barrier for some pilots to participate in a contest. I believe FLARM should only be used for its original intended purpose, anti-collision. For anti-collision Stealth mode is all that is necessary.

It's insanity to fly in a contest, without a readily available collision avoidance device.

Leave the current Flarm requirements as is for regionals and nationals.

Madness to fly contests without it. No compelling reason to incur the added risk and liability. At this point, they're cheap and widely available. If you can manage all the other costs and equipment to get to a regional contest, you can borrow rent or buy a dang FLARM and not imperil your fellow pilots.

Makes sense at Nationals. Leave it open to the contest management's discretion for regionals.

Most of us have had near miss situations even with Flarm.

No comment, except it's a leaching tool

Not sure if real stats reveal a dramatic lowering of deaths. Vendors are involved in supplying the stats. EASA studies show that only 6% of accidents happen at contests and only 7% per latest EASA stats are mid-air (FLARM not helpful on the vast majority so mandating it will only make a rounding error level of improvement). I would rather see more contestants and less barriers if not meaningful in a material way on safety.

Only concern is people have their heads in the cockpit too much and concerned some people hear a warning and look down instead of out.

Pilot's discretion to have and/or use FLARM.

Really now? Why is this still up for discussion? Is USA really that backwards?

Required. It is a safety item of high value. Very pointedly useful when ridge flying.

Requirement for flarm and lack of requirement for Stealth Mode has kept me from competing in national contests.

Safety is the number #1 priority. Just like any sport, if you change the rules for safety, the participants will learn how to play within the confines of the new rules and also learn how to use the rules to their advantage. It's just changing how the game is played and should FLARM (NO Stealth Mode) should always be used.

See 2.5

See above

Should be required at Nationals and at medium to large sized Regional competitions, for safety and liability reasons. Small competitions could get away with not requiring it. BUT SSA should subsidize a small pool of portable FLARM units for low-budget competitors to use at any competition, for a nominal fee. In the meantime, I checked "Required at Discretion" for 2.2.

The best thing that ever happened to Contest Flying.

The list of contests in which FLARM is required should be decided by SSA and published before the season.

The more number of gliders in the air, the more necessary FLARM is. I would be okay with it being optional at smaller regionals but as soon as it grows in size I think FLARM should be required.

The rules committee or contest committee needs to clarify how FLARM units are to be checked for proper functionality. Right now it is left up to each contest organizer, many are not aware they can/should do it and how to perform the check(s)

Too expensive. It is expensive enough to compete.

We have had Flarm for 12 years, time to make it mandatory. I don't like to fly in contests where it is not required.

We need a robust rental program for the newcomers and young pilots, but I think it's here to stay and the Safety benefits are huge.

Why do we continue to discuss flarm use for 10 years?

With the above issues, Flarm should be used by everyone for collision avoidance.

Yes, I would like FAI rules.

i continue to believe that the SSA should champion ads-b over flarm for all gliders.

if it is not i. stealth mode i dont want to know about FLARM

it seems it's most effective if all competitors use it

requiring flarm in regionals will inhibit newcomers to participate

the proper use of FLARM enhances situational awareness and therefore in theory should reduce the risk of a mid-air collision.

3.1a: Specify Tracking Equipment if Other is selected:

FLARM

FLARM

FLARM is picked up by OGN.

FLARM through OGN

Flarm

Flarm
Flarm
Flarm
OGN
OGN
Powerflarm thru OGN
Transponder
Transponder appears on Flightaware
Transponder with Mode S
flarm if OGN available in the area
is OGN softRF?
transponder

3.3a: Specify OGN Viewer if Other selected:

Don't remember
Flightbook at home, whatever tracking link is provided for contests
N/A
OLC
Pure Track
PureTrack
PureTrack.io
Pureglide
Puretrack.io
none
puretrack.io

3.4: What information did you want to see that was not displayed? Name the contest that you were watching to see if that information was available at that site.

18 Meter Nationals 2023. Being able to see the barograph for an individual glider without drilling down is very useful. We also used OGN to see the height at the starts to ensure that the max start height was correct.

2023 Nationals at Uvalde

All tasks displayed

Contest ID and height

Contest ID is not always displayed (e.g. all pilots must register their devices in the OGN databases). Pilot name would be nice. Class being flown is highly desirable. Glider type also, but not critical. Occasionally looked in on every 2023 Regional and National contest using OGN/PureTrack.

Current altitudes. It's wayyyy so cool to watch a race live. We watched sports class nats. Would have been even cooler if the gliders had go pro's on them so I can watch

Each contest was slightly different and it is difficult to remember which showed what. - Contest ID - Rate of Climb - Altitude AGL - Current Average Speed - List the current average speeds for all contestants

Faster updates

Glidertracker didn't have any task info on the contest. I understand some contests put that info on a tracker. I like that.

I can think of many improvements made for live tracking. But my main issue was that not all competitors were tracked. That makes watching it live a lot less interesting. I used WeGlide for the first time during the Uvalde Glide in Aug 23.

I used both WeGlide and GliderTracker.org (with task overlay) to watch the Sports Nats GliderTracker is much easier to use to see the past status of a competitor. Click on the glider, barogram pops up, slide the curser back and forth on the barogram to drag the glider along its flightpath. Very easy to see low points, high points, long glides, circling, etc. The task remains displayed, which is critical to judging the flight path. Easy to determine start time and position. Task remains visible. Other gliders remain visible. WeGlide is easier to use to see the instantaneous height of all the gliders by scrolling through the list. But the barogram view available on the Open Flight button causes the task and all the other gliders to disappear. Not good. WeGlide displays the task speed, but may be inaccurate do to poor OGN coverage. WeGlide required use of the start line which is not used for Regional or Sports Nats contests. They need to allow use of the start ring

It is great as is.

It's really fun for contests when the tracking shows who might be in the lead based on their height and distance around the course.

Live video and being able to watch live stream

More about the ease of use of the UI rather than the availability of the data.

N/A

On WeGlide: when highlighting gliders within the race, they need to display the barogram trace at the bottom while still displaying the whole race. Currently, when viewing a competition in WeGlide, if you want to see a barogram trace of a competitor, you have to view his flight individually. Glidertracker has it, so I find myself bouncing between the two websites.

Seniors World Gliding Championships

Sometimes it would not show everyone

Task information (often not available, sometimes missing during Uvalde 18m nats)

Task information is not available. An ideal solution would be an amalgam of the PureTrack.io presentation of flight information with the contest class & task overlays from the old GlidePort.aero site.

The contest I was involved in it wasn't working very well. Looking forward to it working better next year.

There was something being used at the 2023 club class nationals/Region 3 contest. The coverage was spotty because of the location of the receivers relative to the gliders' altitude and the terrain. Also, at least half the pilots did not have their competition ID entered on the tracker (perhaps intentionally), so there was no telling who was where.

To make any real sense of OGN tracking one needs to know the task. Otherwise, you are just guessing at where people are going. On the one occasion I watched with knowledge of the task it was very interesting and valuable to see how different pilots dealt with deteriorating weather in relation to the need to reach turn areas, and how far to go into turnareas. It would not have made sense if I did not know that task.

Used a combination of glide&seek, glider tracker, and Livetrack24. Not all competitors showed up on each platform.

WeGlide doesn't show an altitude graph while also showing the other contestants (similar to GliderTracker), this would make WeGlide much more user friendly for contests.

n/a

several races

would be nice to see current task speed but that may not be possible. Maybe thats too much info too that could be passed up to the pilot.

3.7: Please comment on your views of OGN tracking at US contests (e.g. with regard to safety/search & rescue, aid to organizers for monitoring and organizing retrieves, entertainment for ground personnel, crew, family & friends, competitive considerations, etc.).

Being able to watch live allows for views from all over the world. It lets other feel involved and I believe will help the sport grow. I watched the Womens World Gliding Championship as well as the Junior European Gliding Championship and Sports Class Nationals.

Excellent for crew and friends and family to follow and see where their pilot is, as well as excellent for contest personal to evaluate if a late pilot is still flying or if they need to be actively searching for them.

Excellent utility for giving crews and contest officials situational awareness as to how the field is progressing and if there are issues developing.

Extremely beneficial for crews. My wife can follow along and watch my progression.

Extremely valuable

Good idea for crew and friends and family.

Great addition to our current tracking methods.

Great to promote the sport and improves response if a glider pilot gets in trouble..

Haven't used it in a contest environment. Seems like it would be quite useful in early identification of any problems with the contest fleet.

Helps clubs find a missing pilot so like it.

Hugely helpfull. Good for the crews. Good for the organizers. Good for both on-site and off-site spectators. Good for the sport. Good for the SSA.

I am in favor of OGN tracking

I don't have much use for it, but I think it's overall a good thing for all the reasons you mention above.

I don't like tracking! My flarm is set to do not track

I love it. It makes it so fun. I am a member of a huge group chat which watches each of our members as much as possible with cheering and commenting. It makes it so fun.

I think it is a good idea for the reasons mentioned and might get spectators more engaged.

I think it is great.

I think the SSA initiative of providing OGN equipment for contest and club sites that do a good amount of XC flights was a huge positive. It not only improve safety by keeping better track of gliders but also helped CD's and club/commercial operators. Hats off to the entire team!

It (OGN) helps a lot more than it hurts

It is a great idea. For non flarm equipped ships it lets other see them

It is great and helps keep crews and fans involved. I watch many contests around the world.

It might be useful in finding a downed pilot after an accident

It's a great idea and should be encouraged, both to bring in spectators and for contest staff to keep track of day's progress.

It's a safety issue. I understand some people enjoy watching the task who aren't in the contest but I suspect they're the diehard contest crowd who show up anyway. My family have tracked me but that's almost irrelevant.

It's a very good tool to drive interest and excitement among club members. I've also seen contest personnel using it to keep track of the big picture and also to know that contestants are still out on course toward the end of the day.

It's cool! A few of friends occasionally watch. It's really helpful for monitoring and organizing retrieves; entertainment for ground personnel, crew, family & friends. Keep expanding the OGN network for soaring sites with and without contests.

It's great for all the reasons mentioned. Makes contest spectating a lot more fun.

It's so much more entertaining being able to watch tracking live. Even if i just pull it up on my phone a few times a day, it's awesome. Sites with no OGN receivers or tracking are quickly becoming my least favorite as a spectator.

Its a plus.

It's so awesome and the best way to grow our sport. Let's put camera's on our wings too

Just fun to watch how my buddies are doing.

Keeping family and friends supporting of my soaring activity is valuable and how i am doing wrt others as well. The safety improvements as stated are valuable as well. Finally it is as much or more valuable for general my cross-county flying and day to day club activities which should not be overlooked.

Love it.

My crew liked it

My crew seems to enjoy it. When I'm not at the contest I'm usually working or otherwise too busy to watch. And it's boring.

OGN at US contests is wonderful for all the reasons stated. We should encourage it's use for all events. Please end the practice of withholding scores on the final day. It's frustrating for pilots at the events, and even more so for fans watching (refresh, refresh, refresh)

OGN is great and if a pilot goes down and is knocked out can save lives. I carry a portable ELT, In Reach and use my Spot in hand outs.

OGN should add safety to the contest from a position awareness and land out stand point. I have seen S&R mentioned numerous times but have not seen any organizers work it into the their contest plans. Furthermore the people heading up retrieves need to understand how to OGN and the data can be used. Should *not* replace calls or text messages directly to the retrieve desk.

OGN tracking at US contests is good for general situational awareness for the organizers and as entertainment for ground personnel, crew, family, and friends. But I don't think that in general OGN coverage is reliable enough, or that it extends down to ground level consistently enough, to be depended upon for safety, search and rescue, or monitoring and organizing retrieves. I suggest that serious consideration be given to requiring satellite trackers for this purpose, particularly for contests conducted in rugged, mountainous, remote, and or sparsely populated areas. Contests conducted in areas with essentially 100% cell phone coverage and or with fair population density and distribution probably would not require satellite trackers. Perhaps again the SSA should consider subsidizing a small pool of satellite trackers for rental at a nominal fee to low budget competitors.

OGN tracking is acceptable provided that done in a way that totally precludes its use a tactical tool.

OGN tracking is great. We have installed an OGN system at our facility and intend to install more OGN units around our task area in the future to provide live-tracking of all flights.

Obvious benefits to widening racing appeal

SSA recommends using Chrome but when I tried that it said I needed a different

Safety/SAR: no experience Retrieve aid: completely unnecessary Entertainment: highly entertaining Competitive considerations: not allowed by the rules

See above

Seems to be a good thing that helps in promoting our sport.

Should be a big screen TV at soaring site with this playing live.

The little I have seen, I see some value for safety. I have also heard positive comments from people on the ground watching the progress during the day. I have heard retrieve offices really like it.

Think it's great for engagement of spectators. I wish the tasks were uploaded routinely for each contest day. Seemed to be very hit or miss and significantly reduced the experience when no tasks loaded. Also, not everyone uses Facebook so posting there doesn't suffice. Posting the tasks to a central repository accessible to everyone along with a link to a simple tutorial on how to load the task found in the repository into a OGN tracker oneself would be very useful and helpful.

This is an enhancement but the track should be displayed with 15 minute delay as they do in the WGCs to not give away the tactics of the competitors.

Tracking is good for safety of the pilots.

Tracking should be required. If a pilot goes missing OGN tracking can pinpoint them much more quickly than other tracking methods. Live tracking of contest is also a good way to promote soaring and racing.

Try to avoid too many applications. For me, one program is enough.

Using tracking will increase the audience to the sport of soaring, which I think is a very good thing. However, it opens the door to "cheating" or providing excessive information to the players, which is not good for the sport. Thus, I'm kinda undecided on this issue. I want it for my own entertainment, but I don't want it if makes the sport unfair.....

Visibility is marketing. It promotes the overall sport.

Waste of time Will not bring very many, if any more competitors

We had a great tracking safety process on the SSA site with the Glider Locator which worked everywhere that trackers were used. Now we only have 33 sites at a cost of \$40k where it appears that watching contest is the primary issue not safety. There are a number, more than 33, that do not have the OGN equipment that really need the tracking for SAFETY.

Where is it? I don't even know. SSA contest results don't link to it.

nice but not essential

valuable to promote the sport and as an aid to retrieval and search and rescue. We should keep building up our OGN network in the US. Portable OGN stations for contests would be good as well.

4.1a: Specify Flight Computer if Other selected:

3 gliders 3 different clearnav and xc soar

9070

Craggy Aero Ultimate

Different gliders, different computers. LXNav, ClearNav, Oudie, and SN-10 in the gliders I fly.

Garmin-12...really

I have both: CN and LXNav; different flight computer in each glider.

LK8000 on Android phone

LK8000 on Samsung Galaxy

Lx8000

Oudie

Prefer ClearNav

XCSoar on OpenVario

4.6: Specify the device that displays artificial horizon if you have one (ie. LXNav S100, LX-90XX etc).

9070

AHRS in LX9070

AirAvionics "Butterfly" variometer

Butterfly

Butterfly Dynon D2 Stratus 2

Butterfly Vario

Cheating device

I've heard LX9000 can do this but I've never tried. I've heard iPhone has the same capability.

LK8000

LX 9070

LX 9070

LX 9070

LX S10

LX-9000

LX-9070

LX-9070

LX-9070 S-100

LX9000

LX9000

LX9000 / V8 AHRS

LX9000 system

LX9070
LX9070
LX9070
LX9070
LX9070
LX9070
LX9070 (disabled)
LXNAV S100 AHRS
LXNav
LXNav
LXNav S10
LXNav S100
LXNav S100
LXNav S10x
LXNav S80
Lx9000
Lx9070
LxNav S100
Lxnav8000 with hawk
N/A
S-10
S-100 and
S10
S10
S10
S10
S100
S100
S100
S100
S80
Uavionics av30
XCVario
iPhone (plus software)
lx9070

4.16: Please comment on any available technology that you would like to be allowed by the contest rules.

4.13 Current rules prohibit ground to air and air to air data transfer except for ADS-R transmissions. Do you still support this? If this is the case, then how/why are pilots allowed weather in the cockpit coming from phones? I don't think this question accurately reflects current practices.

AHRS can, and likely would, allow pilots to break FAR's and should not be allowed.

Allow artificial horizon displays for safety reasons. But consider ways for the scoring programs to flag flights which deviate from the typical altitudes achieved, in order to possibly identify pilots who may be cloud flying. This could not be used to apply penalties, but could be used to initiate conversations regarding how such altitudes were achieved. I recognize this could be very difficult and ultimately impractical. But if an inadvertent flight into cloud occurs, the artificial horizon display should be available. I recognize that this is a Scoring and enforcement dilemma.

Allow with the current restriction of software and cables enforced.

Everyone should have a SPOT or Inreach when they landout. Makes it simpler for the retrieval and safer in an emergency.

First generation recorders should still be allowed in regionals, but should be phased out of national competitions after 2025.

I have a flashing beacon cued to my FLARM, mounted in the nose. I have had two vivid instances where the FLARM alert to an impending 180-out collision caused me to look and I picked up the threat glider instantly, because of his having such a beacon. I got one for myself!

I like racing under FAI rules.

I would like to see logs created by XCSOAR allowed for regional contests.

I would love to see each glider have at least one video camera. It would be so cool for the spectators

Internet data two way communications. It's becoming ubiquitous even for aircraft in flight.

Keep it simple! Don't force a complicated disabling of AHRS. Just say, no cloud flying, AHRS must stay off. If you use it for safety, declare it at the end of the day and accept your zero for the day. Use a little bit of sportsmanship -- and a severe unsportsmanlike conduct penalty if caught. KISS!

Make any exceptions for legacy flight recorders at the scorer's discretion

Please don't increase load on scorer!!

Question 4.12 is the reason we've allowed in-cockpit weather--RC decided we can't enforce it so why make it illegal. In this sport with really nothing at stake and no reason to cheat, relying on pilots' honor is fine with me. If they can't be trusted to follow a technology rule then they're probably cheating in other ways too. It's their loss if that's how they want to win.

Re: 4.15 - Allow legacy flight recorders with the requirement that the logs be submitted by email. Gliders in the 20 meter two seat class should not be restricted from trying new technology - especially thermal detection.

Regarding enforceability of restricted technology (or other matters, such as pilot-pilot communication): We often rely on the honor system among pilots for rules compliance. Practicality of enforcement might be a consideration but shouldn't be the deciding factor. We're trying to increase participation. Many newbies fly with older gliders and older equipment. It's much more important to accommodate old technology for newbies than to accommodate new technology so that well-off pilots with the latest equipment can upload their task from SeeYou.

Relative to my answer on 4.12. Enforcement of a rule should only be one factor in deciding whether or not to allow the technology. Relative to my answer on 4.4. I have an instrument in my glider that has artificial horizon software installed, but not disabling it in no way would tempt me to use it for other than an emergency.

Soaring is a sport, not a video game

The rules committee will never be able to get in front of technology, let it evolve and let pilots determine what they want in their cockpits.

There is a balance of allowing new tech in a cockpit vs. the cost. I would consider allowing the cost to influence the choices for Club Class; trying to keep the cost down.

There is an assumption that no one will cloud fly if they don't have a AHRS. There are people who do it anyway, some capable without the instrument, some not. I have witnessed somebody cloud fly without an AHRS and they were quite capable. The AHRS only stops some pilots from flying in cloud and not others. I think if cloud flying was actually allowed, most pilots would find there is usually no advantage to doing it, sometimes a disadvantage. I would prefer to allow it as a safety device. Admittedly, I have never found myself inadvertently in a cloud while flying a glider. So I likely wouldn't buy one just for that. I do own a S100 but I do not have the AHRS enabled. I might buy the Hawk which would enable it.

Unless you are racing vintage gliders why have vintage equipment. The new stuff is dirt cheap and simple to use. No excuses.

n/a

5.1a: Explain your idea if Other selected:

Allow radio communication flying between all competitors on one frequency. No codes allowed, honest discussions. Otherwise, the communication should be considered to be unsportsmanlike conduct. No team flying using the radio. Otherwise, we could get into a problem with participation if someone feels that do not have a team to compete. We already have a participation problem which we do not want to make any worse.

Allow team flying the same way we do in Regionals, do not make separate rules for Nationals vs Regionals team flying. Please no pie shaped turn areas. There is a huge potential for programming errors, additionally in the case of long skinny wedges with perpendicular legs, pilots have to commit well in advance on how far into the wedge to aim, before the sky in that area is visible.

Allowing (declared) team flying during Nationals is fine in theory, but it must be implemented in a way that does not disenfranchise the non team flying pilots. E.g. teams might not be eligible to be the national champion, and the score of both pilots would be the average of the two scores.

Comms makes flying more enjoyable and accessible to new racing pilots.

Europe allows team flying so we should too for our teams to be competitive.

Hard to enforce. If found to be happening pilots should be disqualified.

I don't know what I like on this topic

I know nationals are used for the selection of the US team for world competitions and world competitions are team sports.....so I don't know how you resolve the fact other than having nationals be team sports, and the top team goes to the US team. However, the nationals would seem unfair if you allow teams but some participants don't have teammates. I would probably just then add a new nationals which is specific to team flying. Make it handicapped and unballasted.

I love team flying. If two pilots are going to be teammates at the Worlds, we should do everything we can to help them get ready for that. But they shouldn't become national champions. I think the current system of allowing it for Guests makes the most sense.

I think if teams were allowed to use their radios to communicate, participation would be affected. Pilots not in teams may feel they are not competitive and might not participate.

If we don't start actively practicing this, why are we ever sending any pilots to the worlds?

It seems like US team members are making excuses for their international performances by blaming the rules. I'll bet the top pilots in the worlds would win in any rule set, including the SSA rules.

No real opinion here. If communication results in an unfair advantage, it should be discouraged.

On weak days let's just get home, we are here to have fun (certainly not doing it for girls or money)

Open commutation on one frequency is the fair why to go.

Perhaps allow pilots who are US team members, or aspire to be US team members, to opt to fly the national level competitions as a team, but be scored as guests. All team flying communications would need to be on separate assigned private per-team frequencies, to avoid distractions and competitive advantage provided to non-team pilots. The team pilots would not be able to claim a place finish, but this could be buffered somewhat by them receiving pilot ranking points by some simple formula. I recognize that this is a scoring and a fairness dilemma.

Radio chatter other than for safety need detracts from pilot performance/concentration. Frankly, a bit of a nuisance.

Team flying and practicing it is the only way to win a worlds and bring it home to the USA.

Team flying can be fun but our racing community is already insular and a clique that is not inclusive and welcoming.

Team flying rocks. And, if we ever want to be relevant on the international scale we have to be better at this. We need to practice

The purpose of a Nationals is to 1) Determine a National Champion, 2) Determine selection criteria for the US Team. It is perfectly reasonable to pull apart these two goals. If pilots would prefer no air-to-air as part of becoming a National Champion, that is fine. A declared "team" of two pilots can be scored separately as part of consideration for US Team ranking and not be in the mix for the trophy. Personally, I think that it would be very beneficial for the US Team to promote team flying and allow the use of air to air communication, ideally on a separate frequency. How this affects determining a National Champion, I don't really have strong feelings one way or another.

There isn't a lot of team flying happening at regionals. If the level of team flying at regionals were to increase, then I think a case could be made for allowing it at Nationals. We know that team flying is important at World Competition so it would make sense to practice for it.

This is obviously a very tough/controversial topic. To me, it depends on whether we are serious about the ability to compete effectively as a Team in the Worlds. Without extensive practice in this skill, I can't see how we can be expected to compete. Whether Nationals are the right arena to practice this is open to debate, but it's certainly worth having that debate.

We need to support team flying, but if we allow team radio comms it creates an advantage over single ships. Perhaps we can declare separate winners for single & team categories?

We're here to have fun, to mentor. People like to talk on the radio. The claim that allowing it lowers participation has yet to be proved. Say all you want, but in a spirit of sportsmanship -- no secret codes -- on 123.5. Yes, that means you won't be on 123.3, but half the pilots turn off their radios anyway.

We're selecting the best pilot at the Nationals. IMO, consideration for the Worlds already has a disproportionate impact on our contests. Some of our classes are already pressed to grid the minimum # of gliders. Do we really want essentially 4 or 5 competitive groups--if all pilots team up--vying for the title?

Works for NASCAR. As long as everyone has access to the frequencies

You can't just give everybody their own frequency. The FCC will not give teams frequencies, contest organizers can't just handout frequencies. Pilots are allocated two frequencies for soaring (with gliders), the FCC allows that 123.300 and 123.500 - "may be used by airborne stations for pilot training, soaring (with gliders), or free ballooning" -

no opinion

7.2: Tell us your experience of flying during a national contest under these rules.

2022, Hobbs and Moriarty. I thought the rules were just fine.

2023 18m Nats was great

2023 SSA/FAI contest rules are fine as is. No changes needed from my perspective. Our rules are now in a similar state as other nations using a similar approach for their national contest rules.

All good no issues.

As a scorer I was surprised at the number of flight recorders that did not have 1 second interval recording, also many backup flight recorders have not been configured correctly. There were minimal max start altitude and/or max speed penalties at the 18 Meter Nationals. When pilots were questioned a common reply was 'lots going, too busy to have my head down in the cockpit and I just went on course'

Didn't like it keep the established SSA rules

Energy limited start led to chaotic traffic in small areas near the line with pilots head down trying to get ground speed and altitude just right.

Enjoyed the start line. Nothing big noted with actually flying in the different rule set.

Entering metric TP radii and start/finish specs were a minor pain in 2021. Getting accustomed to scoring that awarded more points to long flights than to slow finishers was a chore in 2022. The plethora of start/finish options, including speed limits, added yet another way to run afoul of the technicalities of our complex Rules. We all talk about the necessity to make the Rules simpler and easier to understand--and then we introduce FAI Rules. We're not consistent.

Everything worked fine.

Excellent.

FAI rules are better. FAI line start is simpler and has not, in my experience, shown to cause more gagging or crowding compared to a start cylinder. FAI start line with height and ground speed limit is a good system and easy to monitor in the cockpit. US start cylinder with max height and 2 min under is not good and for me causes problems getting started at the time you want to start. Inevitably, after descending below for 2 minutes, you can't find a good climb and then spend 10-20 minutes trying to get back to start height. Get rid of it!

Fun, surprisingly collegial, no issues with the rules.

Give me the rules they use at the Worlds. It is my aspiration to fly there someday, I just would like to learn how they fly so I know what I'm doing if I ever make the team. There is already enough difference going on, we should make it as similar as possible

Good, but for the energy-controlled start, which requires rather too much head-down time than I would like.

Good. A preferred way to lose height/speed inbound to the start would help align the pack. I've seen flying along the line and turning left or right, descending with brakes, circling before the line, crossing the line, and returning for a second try.

Having flown contests for years with a "limbo dance" start, paper map and turnpoint photos, current nationals rules are similar. I am curious why we seem to be regressing in rules. If the changes are to make a better worlds showing (which currently I feel fall short since team flying and ground support are the main issues) then do it all the way. But I can see that type of change will run some pilots out of "FAI type" contests since they have a hard enough time bringing a crew, let alone a "team member" and ground support via radio. I saw the humor in waivers being thrown around/pondered at the 2 Nationals I flew.

Honestly, it didn't change my enjoyment factor or fun level. Fastest guy still won, regardless of the minor changes. Now, with the energy limited starts, (height and speed) I think we've converged on a pretty safe procedure.

I am deeply disturbed by a small group of "wannabees" moving us to "Euro" rules. I feel strongly enough about this that I will not fly in a Nationals under these rules. If they trickle down to regionals I will probably quit soaring. It a MAJOR part of my life. I hope this does not come to pass. EVER!!!

I do not believe that a fair competition is possible under the current rules and penalty system. I quit!

I do not like the line start with energy limiting. It requires too much time in the cockpit to make sure I'm at the right altitude and speed. Also, I found I had to restart many times because of the low start altitude. I usually needed to find a thermal pretty quick after the start and if the thermal wasn't good, I would go back and restart because I was so close. I would try to go around the line but that wasn't always practical. This can create a lot of head on traffic.

I don't like the SSA/FAI rules. The SSA rules are fine, the FAI rules are fine. I am very annoyed that the committee pulled a fast one and used the *SSA Proposed Modifications* to the FAI rules as the model. The benefits of using the FAI rules is that they are doctrinal and are a good training tool for US team members. The benefits of SSA rules are that they leave the national body a lot more room to tinker with the rules. A minority really like this ability, a slight majority of contestants do not like that. Personally I don't feel that strongly about either of these things. But I do feel strongly that the SSA/FAI rules are a bad idea. I have flown in 4 FAI contests, I don't feel that the SSA/FAI scoring is consistent with how the FAI scoring works. Further, I don't think it is a good idea for the SSA to tinker with a set of rules that they don't have much experience with. Finally, it doesn't prep US Team members effectively, so all we have is the worst of both systems. So in sum, go to one set of rules or the other. Personally, I don't care that much, though I slightly prefer the FAI rules. I will say that this SSA/FAI rules experiment is dumb.

I don't see a substantial difference between SSA and FAI rules. I support keeping FAI rules.

I enjoy flying under the old rules and I enjoy flying under the SSA/FAI rules.

I find little difference in the flying and strategy. I'd prefer keeping things as simple as possible. Both the FAI and SSA rules have some parts that are overly complicated.

I flew exactly like I fly any contest, I follow the rules

I found start lines used incorrectly causing opposing traffic (scary and unsafe). The small size of turnpoints creating unsafe/close flying. Also problematic for safety is the use of PEV which requires head in the cockpit flying during one of the high risk periods of potential collision.

I have flown 3 1-26 Championships. The other pilots are always helpful and I learn out. Also I do not have a crew and they have to come get you. The rules are way too complicated for me and I am always not understanding options.

I have flown contests under the new rules in both flat land and mountain sites. I like the new rules, starts and scoring formula. I do not see any reason to change what we have now unless FAI Annex A changes.

I like the line start better (preferably with no energy limit) as it eliminates a bunch of start tactics starting at the back of the start cylinder and waiting for markers. Cylinder start also adds complexity and confusion through the potential for multiple starts. Start out the top is also a terrible safety issue with gliders circling just below start height at high speed with spoilers open. Start out the top also adds a lot of random luck if thermals are much higher than start height - if your thermal Peters out you have to restart or head out on course at low altitude. Bad. The smaller Racing Task cylinders with no distance credit avoids converging traffic in the cylinder and complex tactics to add miles on a competitor and use them for a marker. The FAI cylinders also mean that Racing Tasks are the exact same distance for everyone which is more enjoyable than "mini AATs" in the US Rules. The IGC alternate scoring formulae are also fairer and simpler than the complex and convolute US scoring.

I like the start line

I liked the start line concept

I liked the start line with the max speed! Did not notice any other differences!

I thought it was fine. The tag up altitude, racing task tp area and the start line takes a little more attention away from outside scanning but you know where you should be looking.

It's not a great burden to fly using these rules but it's pointless. Our US contest rules and procedures reflect many years of evolution and they suit us. The only reason to use the international rules is to better prepare our very best pilots to fly in world competition. Any of our best pilots have no difficulty transitioning to these rules during world competition. The only rule that hinders this preparation is the team flying rule. While I support the preparation of our US team, I personally dislike team flying and the problem with allowing it in our comps is that not everyone will or can use it. As far as scoring is concerned, Winscore is a one man operation and if he loses interest it's finished. The only real issue with See You is it doesn't score MATs. Maybe we could talk to them about it or get rid of the MATs.

Like it. Minden nationals

Like the unlimited start line. Hate spoiling down to start

Minimal differences as far as I could tell. I was fully satisfied with the fairness and fun.

Moriarty 2022. It was okay. I prefer US measurements. I would like to see it standardized for all contests. All FAI or all US.

Negative. Too much gagging. Unsafe TPs on assigned tasks. Unsafe start procedures.

No comment

No effect

No impact to my flying in the contest.

No problem, Enjoyed it.

No problem.

No problems

No significant difference. I think the lack of consistency between FAI, nationals, and regionals is confusing.

Not a problem.

Not as bad as I thought. But the old rules developed after decades of gotcha's. We'll see. (Dansville is one!)

Not sure this applies to the 1-26 contest, so no comment

Overall I really like it, but wish we could use classic scoring instead of Alternative scoring. Question 7.6 is misleading because US pilots have never had the chance to trial classic scoring. Alternative scoring compresses the bottom of the scoresheet. I did not like the energy controlled start. Too much workload for I don't know what benefit.

Penalty for a landout is TOO HIGH/LARGE, or one is tempted to go home after one landout. Other FAI nations should adopt U.S. competition rules.

Practically speaking, there isn't a significant difference. Just a different set of things to watch out for without a very steep learning curve. Starts cylinders and lines seem to have been dealt with pretty easily. Obviously eliminating the MAT has some impacts especially at ridge sites but looks like CDs figured that out. The one rule that I think has an under-appreciated impact is the fact that anyone taking a tow is considered a competitor. If I recall the history correctly, the SSA at some point established the concept of 25% of competitors who make a "marking distance" counting in the calculations for making a day. I think there was a sound rationale for this including the idea that you had to be somewhat "committed" to impact the result.

Relatively minor. The only real affect was eliminating the MAT. Many of the quirks in FAI, that were not in previous US rules are coming out. Example at Dansville with understanding of min distance and number of pilots needed to make a day. A good deal of trouble for no benefit.

Rules were good but we flew the contest in (dinosaur era) miles per hour.

Seemed straightforward after adjusting the flight computer. Did not incur penalties. Not a big deal.

The altitude/speed limited start lines worked great! Please retain Really like the "touch-and-go" turnpoints. Much safer and fairer than the 1 mile mini-AAT we had

The contests are better under FAI rules. It was better when we used kilometers and kph, not miles. Same for turnpoint radii, 0.5 km is much easier. we should not be using the modified version of the rules, need to use straight FAI including scoring.

The only noticeable difference I saw at the 15 meter nationals was the start line. I don't see any advantage for the start line over the cylinder start. There is a major disadvantage. Gliders are being funneling toward a line (relative close proximity to each other) while also making it necessary for those pilots to focus on the instrument panel to make sure speed is limited and altitude is limited. It's hard to make an argument that the benefits of the line outweigh the added risks of collisions.

The rules used during the 2023 15-meter Nationals were great. I enjoyed the start line with the energy/altitude limit. It resulted in much less prestart gagging compared to the 2022 15-meter Nationals. It also deemphasizes the importance of the start as we all started with the same energy. The only complaint is you tend to keep an eye on your instruments, but with practice this improved. I felt MUCH safer than the no-height-limit start line (there was no flying in the fuzz).

The start is clearly much more hazardous using a line than a cylinder. The use of turnpoints with radii less than one mile also adds an unnecessary hazard by concentrating gliders in a small area.

They Hybred rules are a good start. They just need to be cleaned up some more.

Uvalde 18m Speed- and altitude-limited start caused hazardous traffic multiple times. Pilots overflow start (after hitting lift just before line), then flew backwards through start area. Now we have conflicting head-on traffic with pilots staring at screens. Many times. NOT GOOD. Also lots of speed penalties. Finish cylinder was set initially too low and caused some traffic excitement with large number of concurrent finishers. Much safer after finish cylinder raised. Otherwise worked well.

Very enjoyable. Nice not to have to worry about a MAT being called. A start line isn't hazardous in a 20 glider contest. The tag up rule is good. Preserving the airport bonus is good. Credit to the center of the TP in an AT is good.

Very satisfied.

Was fine

We should strive to bring the us rules closer in alignment with international rules that our teams will compete with rules they are used to at international competitions.

all for the new rules

happy with it

ready to return to non FAI rules

this hybrid abomination that we are flying under is ridiculous. We need to go full in with the FAI rules. the FAI rules are certainly not perfect and are subject to change however, being different for the sake if stubborn in a pity. We need to practice and get used to the FAI rules. Any event that impacts Team Selection needs to be under FAI rules. if not the results may not be accurate and we might not send the most competitive pilot. Again only setting us up for failure.

7.4: If you have a different way to review changes in FAI rules and adjust US rules, give us your ideas.

Adopt FAI rules wholesale.

Any rule change should be evaluated in terms of safety and how the change affects US contests. Just because the FAI makes a change doesn't necessarily mean the change is a good change. Sometimes an FAI change is indeed a good thing, such as dropping the unlimited height start. Any change should be considered on its merits alone.

Generally I like to just incorporate changes with Rules Committee review, but when possible it's nice to poll as well, with comments. US soaring pilots as a group have a lot of good insight to add to any rules change discussions.

I don't understand this question. Use the FAI rules or the SSA rules. I slightly lean to just use the straight FAI rules and be done with these discussions.

I wouldn't mind seeing the SSA rules being closer aligned with FAI. But the SSA should be able to make improvements. I fear that trying to follow these rules too closely will stifle ingenuity that could make SSA contests better. The USA is not Europe. And the SSA should be a leader not just a follower.

In years past safety was the highest priority for the rules committee. It appears that this has changed to FAI rules being the highest priority and safety being a secondary tradeoff.

Just make them the same as the worlds. Why do we need to make everyone learn 4 sets of rules

None

RC must read and understand and think about safety consequences of FAI rules. They often do silly things. But, especially as subsequent questions reveal, the US rules are drifting away from FAI again, as we realize how silly many FAI rules are. If we can't do kilometers, why are we bothering?

Scrap the whole thing. If you want to eliminate the MAT for Nationals ,just do that. The current hybrid gives the impression that much is being done to help the US Team(10% of the pilots) while very little benefit will occur,if any.

See 7,2 for my opinion. I feel our US rules are better and safer in many ways to FAI rules. US rules are safer-(less gagging) and encourage "individual flying. A small group of wannabees feel that these changes will propel them to the world stage. They are deeply mistaken. Please do not fuck with our rules to please a small group of pilots. Regarding 7.6- The US start effectively stopes leeching. That is why we left the start line. The PEV is using a complicated "patch" to make the start line work. It is BS!

Straight FAI rules, take the US influence out.

The US rules committee is elected to represent the needs and desires of US pilots. Just because the FAI has approved a new rule doesn't mean it should be instituted in the US rules.

US Rules have been developed over time to minimize risk of midair collisions and improve safety. Moving towards FAI rules helps prepare US pilots for competition in International contests. Any adjustments to US rules should be made by balancing both objectives.

US scoring rules have worked well for US contests. I don't support mandating FAI rules for regional contests and am reluctant to see them mandated for national contests. As I understand it, the major reason for shifting to FAI rules for national contests is to afford national contest pilots an opportunity to fly under rules that a few will encounter if they are on the US Team and fly an international contest. That is not, in my view, a persuasive reason to require a shift to FAI rule. I recognize that there will be scoring issues if we stay with US rules, but that should not drive the decision. There are also costs. One pilot told me he would not fly in a 2024 national contest that he normally attends because of his opposition to the shift to FAI Rule.

Use FAI Rules where they make sense, but not blindly. The latest example of this, I believe, is the prohibition of going around a task twice. I've done that before in the old days and I don't know why we wouldn't allow it today. Sometimes CDs call a gross undercall. Or a pilot has a bad first trip and thinks he/she can do better (I won a regional with a faster second lap many years ago in just this scenario). There may be other reasons for eliminating what was another element of strategy but making us compliant with FAI Rules shouldn't be the driver.

We should leverage enough of the IGC Rules that we can adopt global technology platforms without having to create custom versions of everything just for the US. We should also use the basic task format of the rules used in other countries so that the basic tactics of the race are the same. There is no reason to be different just to be different or to resolve imagined problems. All this overthinking of corner cases has left us with complex and cumbersome rules that create at least as many problems as they solve and are intimidating to new pilots.

survey?

7.13: What would you recommend the start line to be?

0.6

1 SM Radius

1 mile

10 Kilometers

10 km

10 km radius

10 km, time to join the rest of the world.

10 miles

10 miles

12 miles

2mi Radius

3 miles

3.14159265mi

3mi

4 mile start line (2 mile radius)

4 miles

4 miles

4-5 mile radius

5km radius

5m

5mi

6-mile start line length (3mi radius)

A circle. I really don't see the advantage of a start line, and there are some huge disadvantages.

A cylinder.

Eliminated

Just make it consistent. Shouldn't have to pull out the task sheet every day to find out the start line has changed. Just one more element to trip over.

Line

No change

Remain current

Stop messing with the FAI rules.

The same as the worlds standards

You keep trying to make a start line better when the US start circle cured almost of the issues with start lines years ago. Again stop this BS!!!

7.15: What would you change in the SSA/FAI rules going forward?

1 - switch to classic scoring 2 - remove energy controlled start 3 - allow team flying

1. Go back to cylinder starts for Nationals. 2. There have been a few cases in the last few years where a TAT task was too short and many competitors maxed out the full task distance and came in under time. However, the pilots with the more favorable handicap received more points even though they didn't fly a faster handicapped speed. I think there should be a rule that if a pilot completes around 90-95 percent of the possible task distance, then the pilot should not be penalized for being under time. The pilot's speed in this case should be distance/time, with no concern of minimum task time.

Again I feel a small group of wannabees on the rules committee have forced many changes which are not OK. For instance, The start cylinder is a reaction too issues with the start line. It was very effective. The move back to a start line is a good example of inmates running the asylum.

Align with Annex A in all aspects of tasking/scoring

Allow California Grand Prix. It's been used at select contests, it works and is FUN!!

Allow for Air to Air and Air to Ground communications.

Don't go to FAI rules generally. Retain US rule for US contest. If US Team members need to practice for international contests, adopt FAI rules for designated US Nationals on a selective basis. And in that case for those contests allow full team flying and ground to air coaching -- since those are elements of international contests we will not have under the US move to FAI rules. They are clearly very important in international contests.

Focus primarily on improving safety. We seem to have lost our way on this goal.

Follow the rules and don't send random letters to pilots on SSA letterhead when no rules violations have occurred. You're cutting off your nose to spite your faces.

Give pilots the benefit of the doubt in start circles on safety factors, be more skeptical of complainants.

Go back to the metric system. Never use PEV. Never use Energy Control.

I am not versed well enough to make suggestions.

I generally would like to see rules simple enough that the majority of the effort in the air goes to flying far and fast not to trying to comply to nuances of the rules.

I think that if Stealth mode was used, a majority of the leeching issues would disappear. It's use also reduces the amount of time pilots spend focusing on their panels, instead of the weather outside. The use of Stealth mode may also eliminate the need for new strategies like the PEV start to reduce leeching.

I'd like to see the distance handicap task used in handicapped competitions. Seems like an ideal task in club class. Could be used in 15m and Std comps that need to be handicapped to encourage entry.

I'm not familiar enough with the exact rules to comment at the moment. I've flown 1 regional....

Just switch to FAI

Make SSA rules identical to FAI rules, including penalties

Make the SSA rules closer to the FAI rules. Use kilometers and kph as the units. Use the FAI scoring rules.

No PEV starts until the FAI settles on the use and rules for it.

Not the rules but the guidance/guidelines. The SRA Guide to the Rules was one of the most valuable documents I used with pilots new to racing. Updating/refreshing that to address changes under FAI Rules would be very helpful.

Other FAI nations should adopt U.S. competition rules.

PEV should be used because it is used in international contests, not because of a leeching problem in the US. Strike from the rules any rule which is different from FAA regulations. If it is legal with the FAA then it should not incur a penalty. SSA airspace rules should be dropped. Artificial horizons are for safety and should not be disallowed. Radio use should not be prohibited in any contest. Let's help newbies with radio use and make it more fun for them.

Quit screwing around with the Rules. I've seen most of them since I started competing in 1968. One of the obstacles I now face is reviewing the Rules every year to see what's changed. Two years ago, the radius of an Assigned Tasks TP changed to a metric value--instantly obsoleting many flight computers. Fortunately, I and many others just inputted the miles equivalent of the metric value. Same for the gates. To what end? Maybe pilots who have trouble adjusting to a .5 km radius TP at the Worlds from 1 mile at our Nationals need to consider whether competitive soaring is really their game. Then at the contest, I'm supposed to check my score each day to make sure it's OK. Bwahahahah. Even the scorer was having trouble at one nationals this year. I don't have a prayer of understanding how tasks are scored, much less being able to assess whether it's done properly. It's frustrating to hear the complaints of those advocating more Assigned Tasks. They obviously never lost a day to a T-storm that sits over a TP while all around, the sky is great. I have, multiple times. Area tasks have their problems, too, but I have no wish to go backwards to the problems of Assigned Tasks. We've tried every start and finish option possible (except PEV). Enough! Soaring is dying, competitive soaring especially. We have too many classes, too many complex rules, and too much focus on winning the world championships. One of my biggest anxieties today is wondering if there will be enough Standard Class gliders to make the Nationals official. Open your eyes and see what's happening. Twice in the past few years, I've flown a dry Standard Class Nationals. In 2019, we flew dry to accommodate a Sports Class competitor who agreed to move to Standard (to give us the minimum #) in exchange for swearing off water. Then this year, when the Rules Committee refused to grant a waiver, we competitors simply had a Gentlemen's Agreement to forgo ballast. There were two gliders with engines (read: heavier) at a ridge site, but our desire to avoid the hassle of water outweighed concerns about a few % points. To be fair, these were both Eastern contests. The few remaining competitors have spoken: less complexity, less hassle (most of us are crewless these days), and less obsession with following the trends at the top in Europe. Just make it easier to fly contests and let us compete--and enjoy it! Yeah, anyone who wants to spend boatloads of money can fly 18M or Open or 20M. There will always be a place for them. But how about the rest of us? Competitive soaring is VERY different today than it was when I started. And we seem to be oblivious to some of the things we've done to kill it. Back in the 1980s, there was some enthusiasm for a Supernationals: the top 10 competitors from each class (Std, 15M, Open--how quaint) at an invitational contest every year or two to determine who goes to the Worlds. Wow, a 30 glider contest--what a thrill that would be! And getting the top 10 at many Std class Nationals would be easy now: some years it's the entire field. Of course, it's no longer just 3 classes. The question below asks if we should have a [new] separate class for the Seniors. Sure, we already have seven (Club, Sports, Std, 15M, 18M, Open, and 20M two-seat). What's one more on top of that? ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MINDS?????

Reduce penalty for over flying class C where it does not violate FAA rules

Revert back to SSA rules for SSA contests (regional and national). Why do we keep experimenting with new FAI "optional" rules in our nationals that don't even get used in WGCs?

Revert to US rules and scrap the appearance of going FAI

SSA should adopt the FAI rules in their entirety. The SSA rules committee role should only be to create a US supplement (local procedures) to deal with issues such as units. Work with other countries at the IGC level to lobby for various concerns.

Stop tinkering with the FAI rules. If you want to tinker with rules, use the SSA rules. Many pilots do not want you guys to tinker with the rules and would prefer them to be standardized with the rest of the world. Choose one or the other, don't pretend that you are using FAI rules when you're not.

Straight FAI rules, take the US influence out.

The "Mozer TAT" is just a TAT. I'm not sure why its being considered as a different/new task type. If the desire is to get pilots to vote to eliminate the MAT, be clear and express that; don't mask it behind this explanation of a specific TAT. TATs can already accommodate a variety of turn cylinder diameters within a single task.

The Mozer TAT doesn't replace the MAT, it just provides a useful alternative. Long-MAT's can be great, but the weather has to be a good match and the task setter need's to build the task correctly. The unrestricted MAT can provide a good alternative for some weather situations. The beauty of the Mozer TAT is that building a good task is much easier than the long-MAT, and using large circles at the end allows for fun tasks in uncertain weather - make pilots work hard with small circles at the beginning, and then let them chase the best weather and get away from each other at the end.

The closer we get to the FAI rules, while still including classes that are not in the FAI rules, the easier it will be for out top pilots to fly in the worlds.

There needs to a place where gliders with no motors can compete without any motors allowed; or, there needs to be a handicap for those with motors.

They should be exactly the same as the worlds. We want to prep our pilots for success correct? Let's race how they race so we get better at it

Use metric for everything other than altitude

Use the international standard of kilometers.

We should simplify the complexities in the rules as much as possible - especially for local contests which you should be able to set up on your cell phone. Regional rules should be converged to the current national rules for technology compatibility and to minimize pilot confusion.

8.5a: Specify Criteria if Other is selected:

4 consecutive days

A consensus of the pilots

After extenuating circumstances like a large portion of the competition returning from a mass land out day near dark from very muddy fields.

Airline pilots are allowed 30 hours every 7 days and their flying is much less stressful.

For Nationals- we should only have "weather" or "safety" days only- Not "rest" days. Nationals select pilots for WGC and part of the game is fatigue management- pilots must make their own rest decisions. Certain situations may merit cancellation under "safety" days. Contest staff must also plan to run a full Nationals- camps/regionals cannot detract from Nationals efforts (ie Cordele 2023 when the best weather day of the contest was called as a "rest" day) and personnel must be scheduled accordingly to prevent fatigue (towpilots, ground crew, etc).

I would prefer no rest days were called (especially when the weather is really good) but I realize there can be lots of factors here and safety should be priority. On one side, pilots and volunteers can be tired, on another side, you may have people spending a lot of money to be there to fly. Maybe rest days should be discouraged but available for extenuating circumstances. Regionals seem pretty short to need a rest day and nationals are prepping for worlds which have no rest days.

If we suddenly go to 14 day contests I may reconsider. For now, I drive the necessary distance to a contest to fly, not sit on the ground. Pilots should show up at a contest ready to fly the full length of the contest.

Please stop trying to write rules about everything. Exhaustion at Uvalde is different from exhaustion at Mifflin. Let organizers figure out how tired people are. The rules are long, few read them, fewer still abide by them. KISS!

Racing pilots are aging and the CD needs to be the one to determine if the contestants should rest. And this should not be discouraged. It is a safety issue for all participants.

Rest days also need to consider the contest staff. We should leave it up to the organizers, but provide some guidelines. This one sounds like a good guideline: After 20-25 hours flight time in less than 5-6 consecutive days. Out west, we should require at least 1 rest day.

Rest days are for the weak

Rest days should be reserved for extreme circumstances. Never before 4 valid days, but normally not before the second full week of the contest period (not counting practice). If possible, organizers should look for a day with bad weather.

Should be organizer option, but guidance to not more than 6 official days in a row.

The Organizer must have the ability to do what they think is best for safety reasons. That said, there does seem to be a perception that a rest day will always be called, and the CD will choose a day based on a number of factors. I think this is the wrong approach. It should be expected at a National Championship that you may fly for 7 days straight.

We should allow the CM/CD some flexibility. Every contest staff and site is different. The rest is just as much for the crews as it is the pilots. However, MUCH more consideration needs to be given to upcoming weather forecasts and the ability to continue to get valid days in (especially if a rest day is called early on in the contest). Organizers shouldn't call a rest day on a soarable 500k day, when there is a stretch of 3-4 days of rain in the future. Fly when you can!

Weather forecasts

pilot fatigue, volunteer and staffing fatigue, weather, 'SAFETY

regardless of the determining criteria the opinion of the pilots needs to be considered. In 15m a rest day was called after 3 days of flying without asking the competitors. that rest day ended up being a record braking day.

9.1: What barriers do we have to keep pilots from competing in more contests?

Accumulated cost, distance & Ranking List prioritization.

Address perception in some that contest flying is not safe. Flarm should be mandatory, and ADS-B Out encouraged. Address perception that contest flying is hard (yes it is, but it is very rewarding and will make you a better pilot)

Allow the Kestrel to be in Club Class. Schedule Club and Sports Classes to be during the summer break. Club Class in particular is the class that has brought in the most new people. Proactively seek sites and organizations that allow young pilots to actually attend.

Also ask barriers to organizers offering more contests. More closer contests will attract more people.

Awaiting new sailplane from the factory.

Blasting letters accusing pilots of cheating because of grumblings.

Continuous reduction in safety focus to advance the case to move to FAI rules. Cost of participation since there are alternatives.

Cost

Cost and Time. Competitive glider accessibility. Initial learning curve is intimidating to many.

Cost as always, access to cfig's teaching xc and racing techniques.

Cost is one problem. I'm retired so no problem for me but the length can be a problem for those who work

Cost of tows.

Cost, flarm

Costs, both contest costs and equipment costs. Lack of mentors. Safety concerns such as too much gaggling. Lack of time. Long drive distances. No crews.

Costs, not sure of a solution but definitely a factor especially after considering travel, food and lodging expenses.

Develop several canned .ppt presentations or equivalent that describes the logistics of a first contest, and how to fly the tasks. Mentors are not always available during a contest, and those who choose to help that way, may provide better or worse advice than another mentor. The FAI rules are a distraction for regional contestants, many who don't aspire to fly in an international soaring contest. The U.S. rules have evolved well compared to the FAI rules, and let's be proud of the results. The FAI pilots and their teams are great competitors, and team meetings are necessary when not flying to ensure their success. That's unfair to a regional contestant new to racing who just arrived at a venue two-day drive away from their home airport. Establish a hard deck rule, because the terrain model in today's flight computers help with a safe landout decision. I as others watched in horror, a glider trying to thermal at 500 feet agl above our landout gliders. Let's stop this stupid practice.

Distance to contest site and limited vacation time.

Distance to travel for contests and prohibition of team flying radio communications.

Distance. Beyond two travel days is difficult regarding vacation time and costs.

From surveys I've run in Region II, it mostly comes down to time. Work styles have changed, many (most) families have 2 wage earners, and there are so many competing priorities. Not sure we can solve for this, other than encouraging more decentralized and/or short term contests. One thing I think has legs is the idea of a "pop up" contest that is called with 2-3 day's notice when good weather is forecast. These would need to be less expensive, lower key, but racing should be the goal, not necessarily meeting the current rules for being sanctioned.

Grumpy Pilots

Grumpy non inclusive contest pilot community with a few notable exceptions. No wants to come fly in contests and feel intimidated and out of place.

Having very vocal people who will never fly in a world contest harassing a world class contest pilot and volunteer to send a letter to three contestants who violated no rules. Bif was pressured into doing this by a well established east coast patriarchy in the sport. Bif is a good leader who made a mistake due to this. And now you have lost him, and potentially three great, young contest pilots.

I can only speak for myself. My main barriers are vacation time and long distances. I plan to retire in 6-7 years, hopefully I can convince my wife to come and crew for me on more contests!

I have been flying the Ephrata regional often and they have done a good job of encouraging new pilots with instructional evenings. That should be encouraged. It is great that pilots new to a site are assigned a mentor. I'd like to see anybody be able to ask for a mentor, even if they have flown a few contests at the site. Sometimes those pilots get left behind.

I think that the time commitment including travel to/from the contest is a barrier. I also think that a lot of pilots are reluctant to attend their first contest because they think that they might not have the skills needed or that they might not be ready to fly in a contest. Clubs could host informal mini 3 day contests that are similar to regionals but not necessarily sanctioned to help pilots overcome these perceived barriers.

I think the 2 largest barriers are: 1. A limited amount of time off from work or family commitments and 2. Unfamiliarity with contest flying.

It's a large country.

It's getting a little bit expensive, with registration costs, hotels, meals for a 10 day contest approaching \$4-\$5000

Just wanted to point out this. With respect to AIRSPACE and allowing access to Class C if complying with ATC communications. To do that requires a Mode S transponder and ADS-B. If that rule is changed, do our rules implicitly require competitive pilots to

have an installed transponder and ADS-B... in addition to FLARM? Is that too much of an impediment to new contest pilots?

Lack of good cross-country development programs at Clubs and commercial operations means there are less pilots with relevant experience to fly in regional or national contests. Other reasons are well developed in the survey results from the past summer. Lack of mentors is a major reason pilots don't fly cross-country. The focus for generating more contest pilots needs to be on generating more new cross-country pilots.

Lack of radio use which is normal in recreational flying, needed by new competition pilots for help and support, and fun for all competitors except those who are too super competitive. If one wants to be super competitive, they don't have to talk on the radio. But let the rest of us use radios please! Also, US Team pilots need the practice of using radios and team flying. But all on a single frequency so that no one is disadvantaged. Do not host 15/18M or Open/18M contests together. It eliminates some people from competing in both contests.

Lack of vacation time. We have more nationals on our calendar than regionals which makes it hard for people new to the sport to get started.

Lack of venues.

Money and time

Money. Time. Complexity. Lack of crew. The perception of elitism. I'm sure there are more reasons but I'm tired of this. How many more reasons do you need? More important, does it really matter since many of the items in this survey will add complexity, time, and/or expense? If we're really serious about making it easier for new pilots to get into competition, let's act like it.

New contest sites would help.

Not an issue.

O

Old bastards don't introduce young pilots to competitive soaring and when there are young pilots they are constantly bartered by older competitors, especially if they are a faster pilot.

One of the biggies is tasking. I know this is difficult but safety should be an overriding consideration for task committees. Fatigue is another factor that I know has driven pilots away. Not allowing 65 gliders at a contest from an airport with a single runway would also be a good idea.

Overall financial demands to own a competitive sailplane/instrumentation, travel to a contest, and participate; geographic proximity/large distances between sites in the US; lack of modern, high-performance gliders to rent; time demand/time off work required; WGC-selection nationals at sites with historically terrible weather resulting in cancelled or devalued contests (Caesar Creek, Dansville), lack of organized mentorship both nationally and at most soaring clubs

Overly long surveys!

Same- time, cost of travel. Unnecessary drama like we recently experienced.

The complexity of rules. The rules need to be split into section or chapter's. Split between contest organizers, ssa and racing pilots. I want a pocket reference that can be read and understood in a single sitting. Contest officials ignoring the rules.

The missing knowledge. It is very difficult, and intimidating, to be fly in a contest (especially one you travel to) without a mentor. There is so much to know and to prepare for. Regional competitions should be advertised more to beginners as a steppingstone.

There is not enough promotion of Regional Contests and no consistent "pipeline" to funnel people towards contest flying. The spotlight seems to shine brightest on controversies over Nationals and an obsession with the Worlds and Team Selection - topics that are either uninteresting to new/casual contest pilots, or are an active discouragement to trying contests. Having CDed and CMed multiple Regionals & Nationals, we have found the greatest success in our area by providing a Regional contest that is focused on simplicity, camaraderie, and lots of flight time. Scoring and placement are treated seriously, but the atmosphere is geared much more towards people maximizing their own performance. Additionally: (1) We provide a cross-country camp at the same site earlier in the season, to get people familiar with the task area and give them some measure of comfort before being at the site under contest conditions (as well as helping newly-licensed pilots get into cross country soaring in general). (2) We pair up each new contestant with an experienced contest pilot, to give them a mentor and a resource (preferably even before the contest starts). (3) We provide a couple of Videoconference sessions 2-6 weeks before the contest to give a task area briefing, share sources of weather information and local area resources, highlight safety concerns, and ensure that contestants get questions answered before they travel to our site. Yes, this takes work but in providing these supporting events and activities we have averaged 30+ registered contestants at our Regional contest every year for over a decade (excluding COVID periods).

This is a silly question. The pilots who know are not taking the survey. 30 pilots/year try contests and don't come back. AFAIK, they have never been followed up with.

This sport is too expensive. Eliminate the need for expensive technology in the sports and club classes.

This survey is to long,. Convuluted rules, I don't have time or care anymore.

Time

Time and Money. I don't like "calling in sick" in order to attend a contest but it is becoming increasingly necessary.

Time and money

Time and money. Like always. It's a hard thing for just anyone to be able to do. I know in my 20's I couldn't fly unless someone lent me a plane, and then only if I could swing the time off. If we have the money to spread around we should use it to lower contest costs and to make more planes available to borrow

Travel is too far to most Nationals. Need east and west contests to reduce the travel. Try not to put contests on the coasts, Georgia was too far from the west coast. Do not schedule 15M and 18M or 18M and Open at the same Nationals. Many pilots have 15/18 or 18/open gliders and should be allowed to fly two contests.

We need some shorter events. Most cannot take off 10 days more than once a year. We need some short fun contests to use as a learning experience for new glider pilots. We need more 1-26 type events. Glider prices have soared. A new Duo Discus is over 300k. Do you really need a glider with a 50 plus L/D at triple the costs of a 35:1 glider to compete and have fun? If so the rules need to change. This sport is dying. The costs is escalating and the events require higher end gliders to have a chance. They need to have more youth events. We need youth.

contests being cancelled due to airport management/policies, and contest being cancelled due to celebrity golf tournaments. Allow more regional contests each year. Travel time and distance is keeping me from flying more contests.

cost, complexity

and money. But the time is needed, and the contest organizers are not charging too much. It is what it is. The most important barrier that can be changed is cross country flying. I just don't think there are that many pilots in the US flying cross country. Get people to fly cross country and they will show up to a contest eventually I would think. Easier said than done.

free time from work/family

keep the cost for contests at a minimum!

more volunteers / more hosts

motor gliders should not compete in the same class as pure gliders... no matter what you say... motors give a clear advantage

petty undermining of the evolution of the sport. Soaring is growing and changing and with that comes the incredible opportunity of growth. FLARM, IGM, ground inclusion, are all very real ways to make Soaring a team sport. Yet many people actively sabotage any efforts to include these aspects.

too expensive. no crew

9.2: What can the Rules Committee do to improve our support of the pilot community?

(1) Keep Regional & Sports-class rules simple and streamlined. Consider ways to provide additional "pre-contest" resources (such as webinars, FLARM loaners, etc). (2) Don't let a few loud voices or special interests (such as the WGC fanatics) strong-arm the committees or run you down rabbit holes and corner cases. (3) Publicly, along with other parts of the SSA, try to draw a stronger connection between cross-country soaring achievement and contest flying. Not just by saying "flying contests will help you make better XC flights", but by putting resources (such as webinars and camps) behind this statement. There must be funnelling mechanisms that hold new pilot's hands and bring them into contest flying, not just talk.

1) Get rid of the US Team Code as an enforceable document for sportsmanship concerns in SSA contests. 2) Add into the appendix that a reasonable criteria for opening the task is a better than 50 percent chance that the day will count for it to be Fair/Safe. Opening the task because you want to will a day into counting is not a good strategy. Marginal days are when people are most likely to land out and break their gliders and should be treated a bit more carefully.

6.2 - I don't think the available responses allow all options. I think pilots should be able to fly above class C without penalty, as well as land at the airport without penalty.

A contest Pilot that decides not to fly on any given day, should not be subjected to any punitive/disciplinary action other than no score for that day.

Abandon the emphasis on FAI rules, simplify the rules, develop and support more beginning cross-country pilots with simple rules.

Adopt suggestions made herein. Thank you all!

Consider making contests fun and accessible for a typical sport level pilot. It always pains me to see someone attend their first Nats and by the end of the week they can't wait to jump in the car and not look back.

Continue efforts to simplify rules, or at least attempt to avoid adding complexity to the rules.

Continue on track with current communication and requests for input from the glider racing community. Consider adding a less-detailed survey for contest interest and submit it to the entire membership for feedback. Consider including questions regarding OLC camps vs competitions with optional task flying activities. An entire (and rather large) body of glider pilots exist that do not compete but would readily attend a safari / OLC camp. Thanks for asking.

Do not allow too many contests to be scheduled at the same time. IE .. Sports Class Nationals and Club Class nationals being a week a part in 2023.

During contests, email a tracking link to a SSA members. And possibly email a description of daily reports.

Ensure that processes are followed according to the rules as written to include protest and complaint management. Continue having rules meetings at contests- great way for pilots to understand rationale for certain rules and feel that they have input. Webinars and/or visual products (PowerPoints or Word documents) that explain new rules changes are useful.

For a start. Allow team flying at the national level and allow for pilots the choose to team fly get scored against everyone else. Not only from a competitive aspect is team flying better but its just plain more enjoyable. Focus on more social gatherings. Contests arent just about the flying. Choose sites that are more suitable for post flying beers together.

Generate a list of tow pilots and competition directors, and keep it current (dated). On occasion, a CM is left short handed when a committed party has to stand done at the last minute.

Get racing pilots to do more SSA webinars.

Have more fun type low pressure events of shorter duration with simpler aircraft for entry level pilots all over to cut travel costs.

I believe that the Rules Committee is doing a good job.

I can't think of anything. You do a great job; keep up the good work.

I like that we get a survey. It doesn't always seem like the results are being implemented though.

I think you know the answer to this. Also, I encourage Bif to apologize and take back the reins. He was doing a great job and poured his heart and soul into it. Stop interfering with currently elected leadership, and stop interfering with the elected rules committee. We must stop the bleeding before we can focus on growth.

I would like to see some sort of mini regional format 2 day contest. Something to get pilots new to the sport more options that consume less vacation time to give competition soaring a try.

I would very strongly discourage the use of turn areas that have controlled airspace inside them (or any portion of them). It's an invitation for the contestants to make a serious error.

In the 20M class: If the 850Kg gliders are allowed then they need to have their gliders handicap adjusted for the extra 50Kg. This is coming from someone who has such glider. Also for the 20M class the handicaps need to be adjusted for maximum weight. There are few gliders in the class. Also the handicap for ASG32 and Arcus is the same everywhere else in the world why is the US different.

It's not a rules committee issue other than maybe trying more open format XC contests that aren't following as many rules like they tried in Nephi years ago. Seems like either tighter course racing or less rigid XC formats might attract more pilot participation. Also balance west and east events.

Keep an open mind, and keep up the good work. These surveys go a long way to that end! Thanks!

Keep doing rules in [ut meetings but pilots need to attend in greater numbers. It always seems we have the same pilots at each meeting. We need broader inputs at both meetings and the pilot survey.

Keep thinking outside the box and allow for some other fun events that are still SSA sanctioned. The US has a good history of doing some unique tasking, which has been adopted by the international community. Just because there's a big push for FAI rules, lets not just follow the herd of IGC/FAI, and forget that we can still do our own thing. (especially for growing the sport) Maybe a sub-section of the Rules, allowing for some SSA fun races for newcomers, which could be inserted into Sports Rules. Small racing triangles, similar to Proving Ground. "Trainer" class? Maybe allow Grob, ASK-21s, Blaniks, PW-6, 2-33s even, all handicapped, flown with SSA X-country instructor, tasks limited to 100km or less, within glide to aero-towable airports always. I envision a 2-3 day contest potentially embedded within a regional or specifically targeting holiday weekends relieving the vacation burden.

Keep trying to include as many affordable equipment types as possible and maybe try more divided weekend contests where possible.

More thought must be given to the role of advisors to the CD! Having a task advisor who is in the lead for example who effectively cancels the last day of a contest allowing himself to take the win. Similarly a CD has a weather advisor who helps cancel three days at a national contest allowing his son to remain in first place. Give some thought to the selection of advisors and maintaining good sportsmanship.

More vacation time... :-) Have previous day flight reviews 15 or so minutes before the daily pilot's meeting for interested pilots and crews which has worked really well at the Srs and Cordele contests to improve interest and attendance which is a low effort activity.

NEVER send a blasting letter accusing someone of cheating again, without Proof. It is inconceivable, that the three pilots were not directly spoken to, before finding the letters in their mailboxes. Why did the contest committee decide to get involved with grumbling, instead of a protest, when NO one made minimum distance. So, what would have been proven if the top 3 pilots that were making the best decisions of the contest, continued to make the best decisions and completed the task, when no one else made the minimum distance.

Nothing I can think of at the moment. Thanks for letting me participate in this survey, it's a first for me!

Put more energy into developing cross-country pilots and their skills. This is the base from which contest pilots appear. And avoid turning this work into competitive events. The pilots may choose to do so which is fine, but organizers of cross country development activities need to avoid making them look like mini-contests which will turn most folks off.

See comment above on Guide to the Rules.

Seek out input from the pilot community., especially new pilots

Stop listening to the old guard naysayers.

Support junior soaring not just with money but with actual interest. You have a senior contest why not have a junior contest for people under 30.

Tell the SSA Board of Directors to stay out of the rules discussion and quit meddling in the racing rules. Make the head of the Racing Committee and Team Selection Committee electable position, not appointed.

The RC focus should not be on turning our Nationals into US Team prep camps, as it has been recently. Rather the focus should be primarily on drawing more pilots into contests at the Regional level. Recent RC dismissive and exclusionary attitudes toward the concerns of non-FAI-Nationals pilots and older pilots will negatively affect contest participation. Many non-FAI-Nationals and older pilots are excellent candidates for XC and contest mentors, are active in club leadership, and are also likely to be potential financial supporters of the US Team and the SSA. The RC should be supporting the interests of ALL contest pilots.

The rules committee has lost its way for the last few years. They have started with the result desired and figured how to enact it. It has caused a time of deep hostility among us which is totally unnecessary and deeply divisive. The day I was told that I should declare myself a "legacy" pilot and stand aside and let the younger pilots run things, and the day I was screamed at and threatened by the rules committee chair are unacceptable. This behavior is pushing some of us to the brink of leaving the sport. Why does the rules committee operate in this manner???

Tow Planes- The SSA needs to have a handful of operational tow planes that can be lent out for contests. Acquiring good tow planes is a handicap in contest planning. More Contests- Make incentives for clubs to host contests. These events burn out the

volunteers and are generally not seen as favorable to the club operation by those that do not have an interest in competitive soaring.

Try something different: i.e., make the growth of contest participation the top priority. The ONE THING the Rules Committee has done in the past 20 years to help keep me in the sport is the small bonus older Standard Class gliders receive (thank you!!!). EVERYTHING else I can think of has been a deterrent in one way or the other. I get it. Tinkering with the Rules is fun. It makes us feel like we're tweaking a highly tuned machine. It allows us to talk earnestly about improving the U.S.'s position in the Worlds as The Most Important Thing. But competitive soaring is dying except at events like the Seniors and Perry. There are traces of hope: at this year's Club Class, the top three pilots were all under 40, and one was a woman (not named Sarah). 6 of the top 10 were under 40. I've never seen that. And the top "kids" are VERY keen to fly at the Worlds. So maybe some of my impassioned arguments don't stand up as well. But that's the first positive sign I've seen in decades. Otherwise, the trend is poor. I'll be too old to fly contests some day, perhaps soon (although KS and SM offer hope). Maybe that's good. I won't be around to see the day when soaring looks like the America's Cup: a small handful of rich skippers competing in insanely expensive designs with the help of corporate sponsorships.

Try to keep in mind that pilots are the customer, not subjects to be ruled.

Well for starters apologize to the winners of the club class nationals. That was so rude. PIC decisions are paramount to any silly rules we might come up with. We cannot question the PIC Secondly we need to mimic the Europeans. If we want to compete with them we need to practice like them. Beyond that just keep it standard and simple. The more things we make new pilots think about the more of a barrier to entry we build. Thank you for taking the time to read my responses. Tailwinds!

Why would pilots bring an airplane to a glider meet ?

doing a great job!

see above.... this has been possibly the worst poll I've seen... some of the questions make no sense...

smaller, short contests at local clubs, like the one ACA in Blairstown NJ organizes from time to time ("Little Guy Meet"). Thank you
thank you all

Responses for each text type.

Value responses:	0
Short responses:	336
Medium responses:	106
Long responses:	501

Return to the [2023 SSA Rules Committee Pilot Opinion Poll survey form](#) to check your input.

Return to main [survey page](#).

If you have problems or questions contact the [survey administrator](#).