

The Comp Organisers Guide

Updated by Nigel Leigh, Oct 2000

This document has been written to guide you through the organisation of a hang gliding competition. Its purpose is to define how to run the competition, and what preparation is required beforehand.

GUIDE TO A GOOD COMPETITION

It is expected that one or more of the tasks mentioned below will be delegated, but it is the organisers responsibility to ensure those delegated fully understand the task at hand. Also it's a good idea to have a look at the rules and have a reasonable understanding of them.

The times given below for organisation are latest times. Where possible, organisation should occur before the times given.

SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE COMP

- * Decide on the dates (including a reserve weekend) and sites to be used and after getting the OK from land owners, inform the league director as soon as possible.

FOUR MONTHS BEFORE THE COMP

- * After receiving the final dates from the league director, decide on a meeting place and time, as well as any other details required for competition pilots. These details are to be published in Airborn.

- * Where applicable, issue a NOTAM covering flying areas for the league.

ONE MONTH BEFORE THE COMP

- * Organise a set of turnpoints, and especially goal fields which can be used for the comp.

- * In case GPS flight verification is going to be allowed, ensure that you have accurate coordinates of all of the above.

- * Familiarise yourself with the RACE scoring program, and GPS verification program if appropriate.

TWO DAYS BEFORE THE COMP

- * If a league starting on Saturday is to be cancelled, a decision must be made by the previous Thursday afternoon and bordering club organisers must be informed by phone early on Thursday evening.

ONE DAY BEFORE THE COMP

- * If a barby or even a mass trip to the pub can be sorted out for the Saturday night, this is always appreciated by visiting pilots.

- * Check if there are any NOTAMs in force that will restrict the airspace available.

- * Determine the cost of film processing to negative stage only.

- * Determine the entry fee. The expenses are to be made up of film processing and any other costs associated with running the competition.

- * Copy extra score sheets as required.

AT LEAST ON THE MORNING OF THE LEAGUE

- * Provide a day board with 1:50,000 maps which shows takeoff, all turnpoints, goal and any restricted airspace.
- * Appoint a task committee of three experienced competition pilots who are very familiar with the area.
- * Appoint a safety committee of three experienced competition pilots.
- * If possible, organise a phone in number for pilots who have landed out.
- * Organise someone to record takeoff times and landing position after the days flying.
- * Organise a means of recording landing times at the goal paddock.
- * Collect the league competition entry fee, determined above, from each competing pilot.
- * Provide a ruler, score sheets and a map to record landing positions after the days flying.
- * Ensure the pilots have at least an intermediate rating and their glider has a current warrant of fitness.
- * Have a copy of the League Rules on site.

DURING TASK COMMITTEE MEETING

- * Decide on task, window times, reflights, restricted airspace, how takeoff, turnpoints and goal paddock are to be validated and a time and place to score the round after the days flying. These decisions are to be written on the day board.

DURING PILOT BRIEFING

- * Announce results of the decisions made during the task committee meeting.
- * Have the day board on display.
- * Tell any pilots whose gliders are blocking access area to move (see rules, launch section)

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE LEAGUE ROUND

- * Record landing positions and goal paddock times for all pilots entered in the league.

ONE WEEK AFTER LEAGUE

- * Write an article summarising the league for publication in AIRBORN.
- * Develop the films to negative stage only and scrutinize all photos. Send films of all scoring pilots to league director.
- * Finalise league competition scores and send to league director (See 'The RACE Guide').
- * Breath in, jobs done.

PRINCIPLES OF TASK SETTING

WINDOW TIME

This should be long enough to give all pilots enough time to launch safely (see Rules, launch section), but not too long. This means it's less likely the round will be won or lost by the decision of takeoff time alone. The object is to get pilots flying in similar conditions. If good conditions are slow to develop the window can be postponed, provided no competitors have launched.

AERIAL START GATE

If an aerial start gate is used at least 60 seconds of safe launch time should be allowed for each pilot before the gate opens. This system should be used whenever it is possible to stay up. The start gate itself should be some distance away from lift areas so pilots spread out and are not turning in a highly congested area, while waiting to photograph the start gate. Ideally all pilots will be flying over the start gate in the same direction at different altitudes.

TASK SETTING

Tasks should start with the easiest leg first and get more difficult toward the finish. This minimises the luck factor at the start and lots of points being 'gifted' at the end. Usually the last leg is into wind or over a long flat area. If conditions are unpredictable, it may be worth adding an out and return along known lift areas at the start to add to the length of the task and ensure validity.

The final leg to goal should, as far as possible, be clear of powerlines or dangerous terrain as pilots will be racing and tired sometimes in low light.

Ensure all points are marked on the map correctly, or the day may become invalid.

GOALS

Should be achievable for the conditions of the day. A task that only a few can complete risks becoming invalid. A task that is too easy is debatably not as bad but will not have pushed pilots hard enough.