

SOME THOUGHTS BEHIND THE '55 RULES

by BOB SMITH

Chairman, Rules Committee

The purpose of the National Soaring Contest, to choose the championship pilot, ship, and crew combination, seems to be a well established principle. This will always be the case in an open competition, and it may not always decide who is the best pilot. There are those who would like to see class competition, and although it may have many advantages and give a more accurate answer as to who is the best pilot it would not be practical at this time. The lack of a large number of one class sailplane may be overcome within a few years, and at that time the rules may require considerable reworking. In the meantime, the open competition prevails and the rules are set up with that fact in mind.

The rules for the 22nd National were accomplished by taking what the committee thought were the best parts of the '52, '53, and '54 rules, with a few new ideas. They are a sincere effort to make a smooth operation of the contest, with a minimum of gripes and a maximum of simplicity and fairness. Complicated formulae, daily weighing factors, and anything else that would cause additional work for the contest staff, and yet give little toward the deciding of the champion, were eliminated. Also eliminated were some of the "Loop-hole stoppers." Sportsmanship and good fellowship should make them unnecessary.

Every game has its set of rules, and an umpire or referee to interpret them. In soaring we have a Contest Board appointed to be the referee. Should there be any questions arising during the meet that the rules do not clearly cover, it will be the responsibility of the Board to make a just and fair decision, to the best of its ability.

The Contest Board also has an even greater responsibility, that of setting the task for competition on task days. Its success in picking a suitable task will bear directly on the success of the meet. The rules are set up with

a bonus for speed points on all but one of the tasks. Now, should the Board pick a course too long, it no longer is a speed task but instead becomes a goal flight, since perhaps only one or two arrive at the goal. Therefore in order to make it a true speed dash, with speed the factor to decide who is doing the best job of flying, it would seem that at least 50 per cent should be able to complete the course. This will require considerable thought, and soaring knowledge, on the part of the members of the Board. The bonus for speed points, for a completed task as stated in the proposed rules, is quite within proportion to the amount of points a pilot could earn on an open day, provided the Board picks a good course for the weather conditions on that particular day. Therefore, care should be taken in the choosing of the Contest Board, since it is of utmost importance to the success of the meet.

The dropping of the minimum distance for points was accomplished to encourage those with the lesser performing ships. Everyone likes to have some points, and the 1-19 that goes 20 miles earns 20 points as much as the 1-23 that goes 50 miles earns 50 points.

The practice of setting which days will be open and which days will be task before the meet starts, will make it easier for a pilot to plan his flights. It also eliminates any tendency to save the best weather for open days; the majority seems to agree that the task flying is as important, if not more so, than open flying, with straight distance one of the tasks.

Since one of the worst things that can happen in a contest is to change the rules during the meet, the 22nd rules will be set in April and not changed thereafter. So once the rules are set, let's use them. Should any unsatisfactory parts arise we can change them the following year. Soaring is perhaps the greatest of

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SOARING CALENDAR

May thru September

Southern California Soaring Association
Soaring Contest (Regatta type)
Elmirage and Elsinore

May 14-15 and 21-22

Northern California Soaring Association
Annual Contest
Lincoln Airport, Sacramento, California

May 26-30

Seventh Annual Wright Memorial Glider
Meet

Municipal Airport
Dayton, Ohio

May 28-30

Eastern States Soaring Championship
Contest
Wurtsboro Airport
Wurtsboro, New York

June 4

Canadian International Air Show
Toronto Flying Club
(In conjunction with Canada's Eighth
International Trade Fair.)

June 20-25

Pacific Northwest International Soaring
Meet
Wenatchie, Washington

July 2-14

TWENTY-SECOND NATIONAL SOARING
CONTEST and TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FIRST NATIONAL GLIDER
MEET

Harris Hill, Elmira, New York

Sept. 3-5

Fifth Annual Soaring Contest
Chicogoland Gliding Council
Elgin Airport (35 Miles West of Chicago)

Sept. 3-5

First 1-26 Regatta Sailplane Competition
Harris Hill, Elmira, New York

Free Flight

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sports; let's keep the sportsmanship at the same high level.

I would like to thank the following for their help and cooperation in making up the rules for the 22nd National, which we hope will be the greatest meet of them all: Paul Bikle, Fritz Compton, Larry Gehrlein, Sr., Jim Klein, and Wally Wiberg of the Rules Committee; Howie Burr and Paul Schweizer, and all the other E.A.S.C. and S.S.A. members who contributed thoughts toward a better set of rules.