

NATIONALS RULES INCLUDE CHANGES

The rules for the 1959 National Soaring Competition are printed in this magazine starting on page 13. Although the basic philosophy of a predominately task type contest has been retained for the fourth year, a number of changes in the rules have been made to correct some of the problems which have become apparent over the past few years.

For the first time the SSA will be responsible for some of the technical aspects of the competition, including timing, scoring, turn point identification procedures and task selection. The composition of the Contest Committee has been revised and it will be headed by a Competition Director who will be appointed by the SSA.

The Open or Pilots' Choice days of previous years have been replaced by Free Distance days. This eliminates the possibility of flying a goal, goal-and-return or triangular flight for bonus points. On Free Distance days, points will be scored only for the straight distance from take-off to landing. This change simplifies the scoring and eliminates problems associated with turn point identification on days when turn point observers are not furnished. It was felt that the pilots will have ample opportunity to fly goal, goal-and-return and triangular flights on the other task days. This change is also consistent with the Free Distance days provided in the World Championships.

Only distance flown after the first 20 miles will count toward contest points on Free Distance days and on other days for those who do not complete the task.

Scoring for speed tasks has been changed. A poll of competitive pilots indicated these defects in scoring formulas used in previous contests.

1. Too much emphasis has been put on speed in past contests. The point spread should reflect the relative difference the individual flying speeds would make on a distance day.

2. The spread in points between the slowest finisher and the contestants who landed near to, but short of, the goal should not be too large.

3. Not every pilot in the Nationals

is a serious competitor for the position of National Champion. The performance of the non-serious competitors should not affect the scores of the top contenders for the national championship but the formula should be able to score every entrant.

4. The formula should be able to produce an equitable point distribution in the event of an "improperly" chosen task.

5. A situation should not exist in which a pilot can improve his own standing by landing short of the finish of a task event.

A large number of different formulas were tested for compatibility with these ideas. The tests involved application to a series of standardized cases, and also to the 1956, 1957, and 1958 National and World Contests. Most formulas failed to correct one or more of the defects.

These defects have been eliminated in the formula finally selected. This has been accomplished with no effect on the speed points earned by all who finish at a reasonably fast speed. This is the primary advantage over the 1958 system, where speed points became very small on days when only a few completed the task; yet, a man going 50 mph on such a day certainly deserves as many points more than the man going 40 mph as would be obtained on an easier day when more pilots complete the task. The use of the table for scoring speed events should be popular with the scorers and with the less mathematically inclined competitors.

Greater emphasis has been placed on proper selection of the speed tasks. The following extract from the instructions to the Contest Committee clearly establish the type of tasks which are to be selected.

"Success of a contest of this type is dependent, to a large extent, on the proper selection of tasks by the Contest Committee before each day's flying. Before each day's flying starts, the Committee must analyze the weather and try to select a task which the majority of the serious contenders can be expected to complete.

"If the tasks are too easy, they will not provide a fair test of the

skill of the contestants; if too difficult, few will finish, resulting in retrieves, added expense and inconvenience for most of the contestants. The type of task which results in an event which might be compared to a yacht race scored on the basis of who sinks closest to the finish line is to be avoided.

"With a reasonable amount of luck, from 10 to 30 pilots should complete a task if it has been properly selected. Although provisions have been made for scoring tasks which fall outside of these limits, these events detract from the success of the contest. Where weather is so poor that it is questionable if a reasonable number of contestants can complete even a minimum 50 mile task, the committee must declare a 'no contest' day."

Other changes are listed in the order in which they appear in the rules.

2.1 Minimum entry levels have been raised to Private Glider Rating and a Silver C badge.

2.1.6 Provides for teams and clubs of two or more pilots to compete as a single competitive entry. The Douglas trophy will be awarded to the best entry in this category.

2.2.2 A change from last year's 15 Meter Class to a Standard Class which requires meeting the OSTIV specifications for the class except for an interim speed brake provision which has been discussed in the March-April, 1959, SOARING.

2.2.3 Elimination of two-place as a special category. These ships may enter on the same basis as other aircraft.

2.2.4 A pilot or team may fly only one sailplane during the contest.

2.2.6 A statement has been included to set a standard of proper and acceptable use of radios.

2.2.11 Provides an alternative to the removal of gyro instruments. They may be covered with a metal cover which, if removed during a flight, will void that flight.

3. Contest awards have been reduced to three categories. Others, such as Feminine, Junior, Two-place, Pan American, etc., have been eliminated. This is part of a general desire to keep the number of entrants to a manageable level of about 30 or 40 sailplanes.

4.4 Requirements for a contest day have been increased from five flights of 32 miles to five flights of 50 miles.

(Concluded on Page 12)