



**BRITISH
GLIDING
ASSOCIATION**

**BGA COMPETITION
ORGANISERS' BRIEFING NOTES
V 1.0 March 2024**

BGA Competition Organisers' Briefing Notes March 2024

1 Rule Changes

There have been changes to the BGA Rules for Rated Competition for the 2024 competition season. Listed here are the most important rule changes. In section 2 there is further information and guidance on how to apply them.

Please remember that you are responsible for delivering a fair and safe competition. The rules are designed to facilitate this and reduce the opportunity for argument when dealing with infringements. Please use your director's report to feedback to the competitions committee any problems encountered that may be resolved by revisions to the rules in 2025.

- **Involvement of host club CFI (1.1.2)** Paragraph added to require that the club CFI or delegate be appointed as a competition official.
- **Multi-seat gliders (2.1.6)** Change in the definition of most proficient pilot.
- **Role of PSC (5.1.1)** Paragraph added that PSC will be used by the Director to consider flying that may result in a non-specific dangerous flying penalty.
- **Responsibility of PIC (5.2.2)** Paragraph added reminding pilots that they are responsible for the safe conduct of their flight.
- **Definitive task and rules (5.2.5)** Paragraph added to clarify
- **Mandatory Safety Briefing (5.2.6)** Rule added to mandate attendance of all pilots
- **Use of airspace after land out (5.10.8)** Rule added to allow transit of airspace when returning to site.
- **Start Calls (5.6.8)** Rule deleted. Start calls are no longer required.
- **Self-launcher release height (5.22.1)** Rule simplified, and contradiction resolved
- **Turbo test procedure (5.22.2)** Rule rewritten to simplify and clarify the required procedure for testing for serviceability and logging.
- **Selection of British Team (6.2)** CC Discretion removed and placed with BGA Exec
- **Penalties (7.1)** Penalty for flying outside certified limits deleted
- **Glider Speed Indices (7.3)** LS8 Neo increase to 100.5

2 Guidance on Rules Changes

2.1 Involvement of host club CFI

In many competitions the CFI is intimately involved in the organisation. However, in National competitions there is sometimes an organising team which is not from the hosting club. The BGA, and the Organiser's Guide is clear that responsibility for safety of competitors, staff, and the public on the site, and when flying takes place from the site, lies with the club and its CFI. It has been decided, therefore that the CFI, or his delegate, must always be part of the organising team.

2.2 Role of the PSC

The role of the PSC will be discussed in forums during the 2024 competition season. For now, there is one small change. From 2024, the Director is required to consult the PSC if he wishes to apply penalties for unspecified hazardous flying. Only with the agreement and recommendation of the PSC may these penalties be applied.

2.3 Definitive Task and Rules

During 2023 there were occasions where pilots claimed that they should not be penalised for infringements because they relied upon the information on the task sheet which differed from that in the local rules. This new paragraph is a catch all that should give the Director more authority in these decisions. However, it is fundamental to the fairness of the competition that the task sheet is carefully composed, complete, and consistent with the competition rules and local rules.

Please take special care to note all prohibited airspace that may be encountered during the task(s) set, entry into which you intend to penalise.

2.4 Safety Briefing

From 2024, a safety briefing is mandatory for all pilots. This should be delivered at the beginning of the briefing on the morning of the first day of the competition. The purpose of this briefing is to:

- Underline the importance of flying with regard to the safety of other competitors, crews, the organising staff including tug pilots, and the public. It is our collective goal that everyone involved with the competition gets to go home in one piece, and with gliders that are serviceable when the competition ends.
- Encourage pilots to put safety first.
- Identify unsafe flying behaviours which should be avoided, reported to the PSC, and which may be penalised. A non-exhaustive list of undesirable flying behaviours includes:
 - thermalling in the wrong direction with others
 - using thermals that are too close to others resulting in dangerous head on situations and potential collisions
 - overtaking on the inside of other pilots in busy thermals
 - dangerous entry into occupied thermals

- flying at high speeds before the start resulting in frightening head-ons
- flying in the wisps prior to starting – especially when 'winding up' to start
- dangerous low flying at the finish or in the approach to the airfield boundary
- dangerous pull ups or pattern at the finish or when landing
- overtaking gliders in each other's blind spot

It is important not to bore the pilots but to motivate safe behaviour in your, and future, competition. It is not necessary to go through all the above points at every competition. For Nationals, state that the competition will be using Proximity Analysis Software to identify areas of high risk so that these can be mitigated. The Competitions Committee is preparing short videos, delivered by highly skilled and respected pilots, that the organisation can use to enhance this briefing.

The safety briefing is MANDATORY for all pilots. You should do a roll call at the first briefing to identify pilots that have not attended. The rules state that such pilots **may not be launched**. At your discretion you may provide a second briefing, at a time of your choosing, for pilots that miss the first, allowing them to compete on subsequent days. You have no obligation to do this on day 1 in time to allow participation in the first day's competition.

2.5 Use of prohibited airspace following actual or turbo land out

The previous rules could be interpreted in either way. We have added a rule that explicitly allows pilots to fly in airspace, such as class D, without a scoring penalty when returning home. Obviously, they should obtain the necessary permissions or crossing services but that is not for the organisation to police unless you receive a complaint from the controlling authority. This rule should allow expeditious return and routing that is separate from those still on task.

2.6 Start Calls

Start calls are no longer required. For the benefit of crews and spectators we would encourage you to show the race in a public space using Spot the Gliders or other tracking application.

2.7 Turbo Test Procedure

The turbo test procedure has been simplified and modified to prevent turbo equipped pilots gaining an advantage immediately prior to the start. Where the turbo has been used, scorers will need to check the evidence to ensure that it was for the correct duration and at least 5 minutes prior to leaving the start zone.

It has also been revealed that ENL loggers do not always pick up FES use. From 2025 these will probably need MOP detection. You should require that the detection is tested on day 1 (not using traces prior to the competition) and are encouraged to check whether pilots are able to change the location of their logger to reduce its sensitivity whenever you suspect that this may have happened.

2.8 Flying outside certified limits

Penalties for flying outside of certified limits have been removed. It is not the role of the competitions committee or competition organisers to police the law on behalf of regulators.

3 Airspace

3.1 Aerodrome Traffic Zones

There are some pilots that are confused about the treatment of ATZs in competition. You as organiser should review the ATZs that lie on or near the tasks that you set and consider whether you should make them penalty airspace or not. Some ATZs are considered 'sensitive' for nearby gliding clubs, and we do not want to give their operators an excuse to apply for control zones or other airspace. For example, Cambridge and Oxford are busy airfields and should be avoided.

If you do specify an ATZ as prohibited penalty airspace, then it will be treated as any other, such as class D. The pilot may enter, with necessary permissions, only for the purpose of executing a safe and expeditious landing within. In this case the pilot will be scored to the point of entry with no penalty. In all other cases, such as a transit, the pilot will be penalised according to the standard airspace infringement penalty structure.

3.2 Drop Zones

It has been traditional to place a block prohibition on certain drop zones for the duration of a competition. Where drop zones are not in continuous use (such as Weston on the Green) we would prefer that this not be done and those briefed daily instead.

3.3 Time limited restricted airspace

Additionally, it is not necessary to prohibit airspace for a whole competition day if it is 'closed' for only a short time. Brief the times with the airspace detail and let the pilots work out how to handle it. All part of the game.

4 Child Protection

We have had advice from Karon Corley, the BGA Child Protection Officer, that special care should be taken if you have under 18s either as competitors or crews. Please identify U18s at registration and have them and their parent / guardian complete a parental agreement form. Forms suitable for this can be obtained from Karon through the BGA.

5 2024 Consultations

We are keen to get organisers and pilots' views on topics that we can see being included in the 2025 rules:

- **Loggers** Proposal to require MOP for FES equipped gliders (see above).

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- **Prohibited Airspace** Proposal for removal of 200M / 100ft 50-point buffers for infringement of prohibited airspace. Choices being considered are:
 - 1) No change. The easiest option but does give the CAA and public cause to think that the BGA condones small infringements,
 - 2) Adopt the IGC rule of 'land out at point of infringement'. This fixes the perceived problems but is not a consistent penalty. Very severe at, or before, the start (up to 1000 points) but much smaller towards the finish or a land out (potentially just a few points).
 - 3) Remove the buffer zone inside airspace. Each, or multiple, infringements of a single piece of penalty airspace would get a 500-point penalty. This solves the perceived problems but whilst severe, remains fair.
With today's in-cockpit navigation equipment pilots can easily set themselves a buffer outside airspace. There may be an argument for retaining a 50-point buffer vertically inside airspace.

The rules sub-group feels that the CC should adopt (3) above for horizontal infringements but retain the 100ft 50-point buffer for vertical ones because of the potential for altimeter calibration inaccuracy. The CC propose to put this forward for consultation as a potential 2025 change.

- **Pilot Safety Committee** To consider the constitution, role, and powers of the PSC. Does the PSC successfully promote safety? What other ways might we do this?
- **PEV Starts** To consider adoption of PEV starts and other start rules. The FAI has a PEV start procedure which may be modified at the March 2023 Plenary. When this is fixed, we want to ask pilots whether they would like to see this adopted as an option in 2025.
- **Tie Breaks for National Champion** Should we have a tie break procedure? The 2023 20M Nationals was a one-day competition and resulted in a tie despite one team flying slightly faster than the other.
- **Provisional Competition Licences** For pilots new to competition. The BGA and CC are concerned about low experience pilots competing in fiercely contested competitions in their first year. We are considering that first time competitors be issued with a provisional licence endorsed by their CFI in year 1. The directors of their year 1 competitions would then be consulted on the issuance of full licences in year 2. Do we think this is a good idea?

Please consider holding a pilot forum on a scrub day to discuss these topics with the pilots and please record their inputs for consideration by the CC. If possible, a member of the CC will be present to assist.

6 Referees

Once again, the CC will appoint a referee for your competition. The purpose of a referee is to assist you and your organisation in interpretation of the rules. This may become necessary if there is a need for clarity regarding a penalty, a protest, or a decision requiring the stewards to get involved. The referee will not interfere with your running of the competition and will only get involved as referee when asked.

Finally: -

If you have any questions about the contents of this document or any other issues that you need help with, please don't forget the Comps Committee has a lot of contacts and expertise amongst its members. Don't hesitate to get in touch. You can contact the Competitions Committee directly by email: - compscommittee@gliding.co.uk

If you have any difficulties with interpretation of the rules, please do not forget to consult your appointed referee. We are here to help.

Have a great competition.

The BGA Competitions and Awards Committee