



This competition format has been developed as an alternative to the standard BGA Rules For Rated Competitions. The standard Rules are necessarily rigorous to cater for National Championships where similarity to International Rules is a requirement. However, at UK Regionals level, such rigour is not entirely necessary and the complexity of the standard rules can be a barrier to pilots and potential organisers.

Despite the simplified format, Regional competitions using these rules may be BGA rated and competitors can receive a rating in the BGA rating list.

In addition, the format can be used for non-rated or club competitions and will allow new cross-country pilots to gain skills and experience that will enable them to safely take part in higher-level competitions in their gliding journey.

Prerequisites for running the competition

In order to run a successful competition using this format you will need to:

- 1) Appoint a Director and a Deputy Director. These principal officials will be responsible for the conduct and safety of the competition. Ideally, one of these should be the club CFI or deputy CFI. Additional officials can be appointed for task setting, met, marshals, scoring etc.
- 2) A task setting and scoring computer with See You installed. If you intend to set and score DHTs then you should also install the Handicap Task software. You will also need some method to distribute results and scores. Either See You competition or Excel are fine.
- 3) Most importantly, you need to co-opt someone who is proficient with using these tools!
- 4) Some means of briefing. You will need to deliver the task and airspace briefing to competitors on both paper and social media. We recommend that you produce PDFs of the briefing documents and distribute them to a WhatsApp group. If pilots request a paper copy you must be able to deliver it.

Local rules and files

The simplified rules are published on the BGA web site and are available to download by the competitors. In addition you should produce a document containing local rules, procedures, and other information covering site / competition specific items:

- 1) The dates of the competition and whether it is to be rated or not.
- 2) The names and contact details of the designated officials.
- 3) Which task types will be used and the co-ordinates of the Airfield Reference Point (ARP) if finish rings are to be used.
- 4) How briefing will be done with details of electronic communication methods to be used.
- 5) Permanent prohibited airspace not specified elsewhere.
- 6) It is suggested that a handy frequency list be prepared for all airfields in the task areas.
- 7) Two radio frequencies to be used for control, finish, and on-task communication by pilots.

- 8) Gridding procedures if formal gridding to be employed.
- 9) Whether non-IGC loggers will be allowed.

To assist competitors, you should also try to provide a CUP file containing all the turn points to be used during the competition, including the ARP. It is recommended that you also supply a CUB file of the airspace to be used for scoring. Both of these can easily be generated by See You software.

If you expect competitors from other clubs to enter you should also provide details of the airfield, trailer parking, rigging and ballasting facilities, runways, etc. to help them familiarise themselves with the site.

These local rules should ideally be provided to the competitors at least one week in advance and, if the competition is to be rated, should be reviewed by the Competitions Committee prior to their publication.

Entries

Entrants are required to have achieved a Silver C. If the competition is to be rated entrants will need an FAI competition licence available from the BGA website and the organisation will be required to pay the normal rating levy to support the National teams. The rules do not require entrants to show their documents at registration but the organisation should at least do spot checks to ensure that they have the necessary certificates, insurance, and licences to participate legally.

Accidents and Emergencies

It is highly recommended that the organisers prepare an accident and emergency plan to cover possible incidents during the competition including launch failures, accidents during the task, field landing accidents, finishing and landing. It is important to plan how you will handle missing aircraft. Depending upon the airfield size and layout it may also be necessary to plan how you will clear the landing areas in the event of accident or congestion as pilots return from the task.

Task Setting

This format allows both racing tasks and distance handicapped tasks to be set. The simplest is the racing task which may be set using See You alone. DHTs allow fairer racing for low handicap gliders but require specialist software and additional care to ensure that the fairness that they provide is actually delivered.

Tasks should be set to exploit the weather forecast for the day. Tasks have to be long enough to be challenging but short enough to be completed by less experienced competitors. These will typically be between 80k and 200k. Note that in this format at least one competitor must finish for the day to be valid.

Start Line

The start line is designated as 10km long perpendicular to the outbound track. There is no volume behind the line and no penalty zones. It can only be controlled by crossing the line below the maximum designated start height or up to 250ft above.

Turn points

Turn points are designated as a barrel of 500m (or greater if a DHT is set) with a 20km sector opposing the bisector of inbound and outbound tracks. There are no penalty areas.

Check points

Check points may be employed to avoid airspace problems or align the final glide safely into the finish. These are always a barrel of 500m with the 20km sector behind.

Finish

You can designate the finish as either:

- 1) A line of at least 1km+ length positioned along the inbound boundary of the airfield or
- 2) A ring of 3km radius centred on the ARP which should typically be the middle of the airfield.

In the latter case a minimum finish height must be specified that allows all competitors to finish at that height and perform a safe glide, circuit, approach, and landing on the airfield. Normally 500ft will suffice if finishing into wind, but local site conditions must be assessed by the Director(s) before specifying minimum finish height.

Routing

Tasks should be set with careful consideration of airspace challenges that may arise. Where possible tracks between turn points should stay 5k or more from prohibited airspace and not require the pilot to divert away from the track line to avoid it. Special attention should be paid to busy airports and drop zones.

Distance Handicap Tasks

DHTs require addition care as the track routes for the highest and lowest handicap glider will differ. Be careful not to disadvantage one over the other by either:

- 1) Making the high handicap glider turn under more or less restrictive airspace than the low handicap glider.
- 2) Making the barrels too large as this disadvantages the high handicap glider. Add TPs.
- 3) Making the lower handicap glider divert around airspace where the high handicap does not need to. Use control points if necessary.

The recommended DHT Task setting procedure is as follows:

- 1) Design a task appropriate to the highest handicap glider and the weather using See You
- 2) Enter this task into the Handicap Task Calculator using the same start, TP, and finish parameters
- 3) Enter the predicted wind speed and direction if Windcapping is to be used e.g. rated comp.
- 4) 'Calculate' the task then view the 'Best Points' file in See You
- 5) Check that the highest and lowest handicap tracks are not compromised by airspace or other issues e.g. large expanses of water, sea breezes etc. Redesign the task if they are.
- 6) Add notes, frequencies, notams etc. then publish.

Further information can be found in the Handicap Task Software help files.

Start Times and Procedures

Starts may be either held or regatta types. You may either:

- 1) Set a first start time, or regatta start time, at briefing that allows all pilots to launch and position in the start area before the line opens.
- 2) Set a first start time, or regatta start time, in the air by radio announcement after launching. You will then need to specify a first launch time and allow the last pilot, who does not refuse a launch when offered, enough time to position in the start area before you open the line.

You should also announce start times at 10, 5, and 1 minute intervals by radio beforehand.

Gridding and Launching

In this format formal gridding is not a requirement. However, if you have a large number of entries you may choose to design your own procedure. In this case you should try to follow something similar to the standard rules procedure:

- 1) Grid in rows within classes.
- 2) Rotate the rows every competition day so that all pilots get an opportunity to be at the front and back of the grid during the competition.
- 3) Define a failed launch and relight procedure that gets competitors back in the air expeditiously after landing and / or returning to the launch point.

Experience in the trial competitions demonstrated the benefit of formal gridding and launching at a time of the director(s) choosing. If pilots are left to their own devices, they tend to leave it too late to launch and complete the task. If you intend to launch informally, consider asking pilots to only pull on line when ready to be launched. Further advice can be found in the Competition Organisers Guide available on the BGA website.

Competitors should be launched by aero tow to 2000ft to a designated release zone and waved off. They may release at any time beforehand. If winch launching is used, 2000ft may not be possible, but if it is, then pilots must release at 2000ft. Self-launchers should be briefed the position of the release zone and do the same. In non-rated competition the organisation can specify a greater launch height if desired.

It is important that either the Director, the Deputy Director, or both are present at launching to ensure safe conduct of the procedure. Either may suspend the launching at their sole discretion on any safety grounds.

Observation of Finishes

The finish period, especially when using regatta starts or DHTs, is possibly the least safe component of a competition. It is important that either the Director, the Deputy Director, or both are present to monitor radio calls and observe pilot behaviour at the finish. If either observes hazardous flying or the potential for collisions or accidents at this time they should positively intervene by radio and apply penalties if required.

Evidence

If the competition is unrated, you can allow the use of non IGC approved flight recorders. However, if you do, then you must consider the opportunity this provides for pilots to tamper with evidence. Retrieval of evidence from unsecure loggers should ideally be observed by a competent official.

Gliders fitted with engines must use a flight recorder with a suitable means of detecting if the engine is used. For normal turbos and FES an ENL will suffice but for jet and other electric motors an MOP will be required.

Scoring

In this format tasks are scored using a “place points” system. Each pilot will get points depending upon their speed around a completed task, then the handicapped distance flown if landed out.

The first pilot will get points equal to the number of starters + 1 bonus point

The other pilots will get points equal the winners less their placing position

e.g. with ten starters, the winner will get 11 points, the second 9 points, the third 8 points, and the last 1 point.

With racing tasks, finishing positions can be easily determined in either See You competition or, in the case of a non-rated competition, a spreadsheet by dividing the actual speed or distance by the glider handicap and ranking accordingly.

With DHTs, the evidence must first be processed by the Handicap Task Scoring software and then See You competition using the BGA2022 script. In non-rated competition, again, a spreadsheet will suffice with pilots ranked first by elapsed time to completion then distance flown.

All evidence needs to be inspected to ensure that starts, turn points, control points, and the finish have been correctly controlled and that no prohibited airspace has been infringed. Penalties can then be applied and results adjusted accordingly and published.

Further advice can be found in the BGA Scoring Guide found on the BGA website.

Safety

Above all, these competitions must be conducted safely. This format is aimed at less experienced pilots. The organisation has, therefore, a greater responsibility for the safe conduct of the competition:

- 1) Set tasks which are achievable by less experienced pilots
- 2) Set tasks that allow safe field landings, preferably at airfields
- 3) Set tasks that avoid difficult airspace problems
- 4) Allow pilots sufficient time to get organised before the start window opens
- 5) Highlight, and penalise, unsafe flying behaviour early

Specify clear finishing procedures with radios calls for 10km out, entering the circuit, and finals.

Review and promulgate in briefing any issues that arise each day as learning points.

Trial and Feedback

2022 is the first season where this format can be used. The Competitions Committee invites clubs to trial the new rules and welcomes any feedback about the rules or the conduct of the competition in order to refine the format for future years.

Above all enjoy competition and competitive flying. Make it fun.