UK National Paramotor Championships 2005

***IMPORTANT.** V4, 3 Apr 2005. This is a concept and general description document, not the rules which are laid out separately. This document may change in the coming weeks if it is thought that a particular concept will not work. Queries to [Richard Meredith-Hardy](#)*

New championship concept

The 'traditional' method of running championships means competitors flying tasks at a set time, either with a 'takeoff window', typically two hours, or in a set order as used for many precision tasks.

This method has many problems, notably when the weather is changeable of marginal.
- It is difficult and cumbersome to brief changes to the scheduling of tasks.
- The weather can often change during a task with set takeoff order making it unfair.
- The 'latest' time a task with set takeoff order can start at all is defined by local sunset time. With large numbers of competitors, sometimes it is impossible to run a task even when there may be two hours of good evening flying time available.
- Things often happen 'all at once' which is difficult for the organization to manage; fuelling control and checking takeoff times are two such examples, but there is also a 'rush' for the flight evaluation and scoring staff immediately after a task which in practice makes the concept of 'real-time' scoring an impossibility.

With the advent of GPS flight recorders it is proposed to change all this by radically altering the way the championship is run. Instead of pilots doing tasks all together in a set order at set times, the entire championship period will be an 'open window' and pilots can do the tasks in any order they like, when they like.

This introduces:
- An element of longer-term weather evaluation which is an important pilot skill absent from 'traditional' championships.
- An interesting element of both individual and team tactics.
- The possibility of real-time scoring as flight information will be coming back in a much more 'continuous stream' rather than in sudden rushes which will have the overall effect of reducing the burden on the flight evaluation and scoring staff.
- The possibility that pilots will get to do more flying than was possible in a 'traditional' championships because they can choose to fly when they want rather than when the Director says.
- A reduction in perceived nuisance from local residents. Occasional overflights are much less noticeable than a huge 'fleet' of aircraft all coming at once which is a significant problem with many 'traditional' style nav tasks.
- The possibility of a reduction in stress on the championship staff as the pressure on them to do several things all at once will be reduced with the consequence that less errors will be made and it will be a more enjoyable experience for everyone.

How will this be managed so it is fair?

Briefings

All tasks will be briefed on the internet well before the event. Important details of some tasks may not be available until shortly before a pilot starts a task, such as turnpoint locations, but all pilots are expected to be familiar with all the tasks before they arrive on site.

There will be one major briefing for all tasks before the championship starts. After that, any alterations or amendments allowed within the rules will be posted on the official notice board.

Task managers

There will be a 'task manager' on duty at all times for each task. This official is responsible for the overall management of the task and will maintain a takeoff timetable set at minimum intervals which let him easily manage the task.

Task tokens & task declaration

At registration, each competitor will be issued with a *token* which is used to declare a task. Each pilot wishing to fly a task must present himself to the task manager, hand over his token and declare when he will takeoff for the task. On a first-come first-served basis the task manager will fit the pilot into his timetable as near as possible to the time the pilot wants. This time determines when the task countdown starts.

Once a pilot has declared his next task he cannot retract that declaration in favour of another task.

Task countdown

A task countdown period will be set for each task (Normally 1 hour). Once a task's countdown has begun then the pilot can obtain any documentation necessary for the task from the task manager such as turnpoint information and flight declaration forms. A penalty will be applied if the pilot deviates from the agreed takeoff time.

Flying the task

The pilot flies the task according to the brief. Each task may only be flown once.

Flight declaration

A flight declaration is the full record of the pilot's performance and will vary with the task. It may consist of the pilot's flight recorder and/or various forms issued by the task manager which may need to be completed by the pilot or the task manager before, during or after the flight.

It is entirely the pilot's responsibility to ensure he delivers a complete flight declaration to the flight evaluation and scoring control office. A checklist of required items will be provided in the brief, a penalty will be applied for incomplete flight declarations.

Finishing the task

Each task will have a 'maximum allowable time' set in the brief which is the time beyond the declared takeoff time in which the pilot must complete the task *and* present their flight declaration to the flight evaluation and scoring control office.

If a complete flight declaration is not received within the maximum allowable time then the pilot gets a zero score for that task.

If a pilot lands out, then the pilot must at least still telephone the flight evaluation and scoring control office before the expiry of the maximum allowable time for that task. The pilot will then be granted an extension sufficient to return to the airfield, assemble and present their flight declaration to the flight evaluation and scoring control office.

The pilot is deemed to have finished the task once he has presented his flight declaration or has exceeded the maximum allowable time for that task, whichever is first.

A new token will then be given for the pilot so he can start another task.

Championship window

This is the period in which pilots must start and finish all tasks. Pilots may fly tasks whenever the green flag is hoisted which will be between:
28 May: 10:00 – 21:30
29 May: 07:00 – 21:30
30 May: 07:00 – 21:30

31 May: 07:00 – 12:00

Special periods

These will be declared in advance of the championships. These are reserved times for 'spectacular' tasks like the eco-laps which are interesting to spectators when flown en-masse. A pilot may choose to be absent from the site on another task of his choice but it is only possible to fly each 'fixed' task in the defined special period.

Weather

Although pilots may in principle fly tasks when they wish within the championship window, the Director retains the right to hoist a red flag at any time if he considers the weather conditions unsuitable or unsafe. While the red flag is flying no pilot may take off and task countdowns are suspended.

If, in the Director's opinion, the Task Count is unlikely to reach the minimum required for a valid championship (4) then he may extend the championship window.

If the weather forces the abandonment of a special period task, then the director may reschedule it (but to a time not less than 12h in advance of the original planned time). Pilots who have already made a task declaration which is likely to conflict with the rescheduled special period task may ask the Task Manager to revise their takeoff time but their declaration may not be retracted in favour of another task.

No-fly-zones (NFZ's)

A master map of NFZ's will be maintained on the official notice board. In principle, pilots who fly in any notified NFZ, at any height will be penalized; 1st infringement: 20% of task score, 2nd infringement: 40% of task score, 3rd infringement: 60% of task score and they are disqualified from the championships for any further NFZ infringement.

If there is a complaint, for example, then it may be necessary for the Director to introduce a new NFZ on the master map. All NFZ's will all have a date and time attached to them and they become valid for each pilot at the moment their next task countdown starts.

Scoring method

The scoring concept is **not** to reward the pilot who flies the most tasks in the championships but to reward the pilot who flies consistently the best.

Task count

Tasks are scored in the order each pilot finished each task. A *Task count*, the running median of *tasks finished by all competitors still active in the championship* will be continuously maintained and this number will be prominently displayed at the flight evaluation and scoring centre. (The median is the number in the middle of a set of numbers; that is, half the numbers have values that are greater than the median, and half have values have less, rounded down to the nearest integer). In other words if the median is five then everybody's first five tasks are counted in the overall scoring. If a pilot has finished 6 tasks, then the sixth is not counted, but may be counted later when and if the median rises, and so on. Equally, if a pilot has only finished four tasks, then only those tasks will be scored and he had better get on and catch up.

Disqualified competitors or those that have permanently withdrawn from the championship are deemed to no longer be 'still active in the championship' and their performance will no longer be used to calculate the Task count.

The task count will be fixed at its current setting four hours before the end of the championship window or at the beginning of the last competition day, whichever (in hours) is greater.

Task balance

The total number of tasks available will be approximately the number which could be expected to be achieved in a 'traditional' championship which did not suffer weather delays.

The 'traditional' balance of 1/3 precision, 1/3 navigation and 1/3 economy will be maintained across all possible tasks, but it is entirely the pilot's choice which tasks he flies and in which order.

Pilot performance

Because all task scores will remain fluid until the end of the championship there is a clear distinction between *pilot performance data* and the *score* a pilot eventually receives. The scores are not final until the complaints and protests deadline for the whole championship is reached. On the other hand, pilot performance data entered into the scoring system will become final 12 hours after the moment a pilot's provisional scores are first published. This becomes 2 hours once the end of the championship window is reached.

Complaints & Protests

Complaints and protests may only be made against provisional pilot performance data. Whilst there are still provisional scores in the system the organization welcomes complaints and observations at any time about the method in which pilot performance data is resolved to a score but complaints about the scores themselves will not be accepted.

The scores automatically become final at the moment at which all pilot performance data is final.