

# **JUDGING TIPS**

## **SAFETY & SECURITY :**

Judges like pilots have to be aware of local safety and security rules, flying areas, allowed flying times, use of frequencies, management of parking facilities...

During a flight, if you're not feeling comfortable because of obvious risks (sudden and strong wind changes, bad state of a plane, overly stressed pilot...) tell it to the contest director. If the security is compromised the contest director might then ask the pilot to land.

(Sporting Code 5.1.8.1))

By asking to safely fly specific manoeuvres in a defined area, aerobatics challenge people to be safer model aircraft pilots and help us to promote our hobby.

## **KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING THE RULES:**

Even if it sounds obvious it's better to know the rules while you're about to attend a contest, it doesn't always look like it on the airfields...

Knowing the rules requires a bit more than having the schedule in mind, and it works for both judges and pilots.

There are different layers of rules, from general to specific with, at the end the schedule which is the tip of the iceberg.

It's important to know the global philosophy as well as the precise points: as a judge it's the best way to guarantee a fair judgement, as a pilot it's the best way to understand what to improve in your next flights. It's key to keep the trust and all work in the same direction, there's no sheriffs and cowboys, it's one same hobby that we're sharing and loving.

To be familiar with all the rules your best friend in your judging journey is the Sporting Code, the mantra of the last 3 chairmen of the CIAM Aerobatics sub committee I've known was: Read your Sporting Code!

## **HOW TO USE THE SPORTING CODE?**

The Sporting Code looks massive but keep in mind that it's able to answer to most of the questions you will raise in your judging journey.

Before eventually diving deep into it you can take an easy start with the following items:

F3 matters are treated in its section 4C, Part 5.

5.1.8 Marking (p13)

5.1.12 Execution of manoeuvres (p17)

Annex 5B F3 R/C Aerobatic Aircraft, Manoeuvre execution guide (p37)

And then the Annex 5A Description of manoeuvres (p21)

This last Annex 5A introduces the different schedules with a text describing each manoeuvre and at the end a drawing of them.

There are different ways to draw the schedules, the easiest one to read is most probably the ribbon one. The thing is when the manoeuvres become more complex it's basically impossible to transcript them with the ribbon method.

The method which had then been chosen is the Aresti one.

It's called Aresti after his inventor: José Luis de Aresti Aguirre, a Spanish pilot who developed in 1961 this graphic system to describe manoeuvres.

It allows us with the use of symbols and codes to represent all the existing manoeuvres. With a little bit of practice you should be able to read and use it easily.

It's great help to visualise schedules, have a quick look when uncertain of a manoeuvre but you have to keep in mind that it uses symbols, it's not the exact draw, perfectly looking like schedule or only way to fly manoeuvres.

## WHAT DO WE HAVE TO LOOK AT?

Annex 5B.2 General & 5B.3 Execution of manoeuvres:

Flight path, straight and levelled entry/exit of manoeuvres...

Geometry, speed, positioning, sizing...

## HOW DOES SCORING WORK?

The scoring method is based on a downgrading system (5.1.8.b)).

The criteria are mainly based on geometry.

The manoeuvres are known, their descriptions are in the Annex 5A.

Each manoeuvre is individually scored, starting with a perfect score of 10.

If you ever notice a default you have to lower the score depending on the importance of the mistake, from minimum half a point and more if the defect is more important, the Sporting Code defines the scale.

One important thing is to be consistent and always apply the same penalty to the same mistake all through the contest.

Downgrade according to what you see, not what you think it should worth or what the other judges will do. Be fair, use the entire panel of scores from 10 to 0, regardless who is flying or what kind of plane is flying.

Again, it's a downgrading system, there's no bonus at the end of the countdown if you think the manoeuvre was pretty, you started with the perfect score of 10, that was already included...

If you look at a scoring sheet the difficulty of a manoeuvre goes with a k factor, the more complex it goes the highest is the k.

You then don't have to change anything in your method when you judge a tough figure, the difficulty will appear in the final score through this multiplying factor.

Subtracting points because of differences from the ideal manoeuvre means that you have to know your schedule well enough to be prepared for every single manoeuvre coming.

In case of a zero, 5.1.8.c)

The score 0 can be given if the number and gravity of mistakes is that important that there is no half point left. There's no further action required after a poorly flown manoeuvre.

If the manoeuvre had not been completed or flown out of sequence it has to be scored zero (0) and the judges must talk about it and bring it to the attention of the flight line director/contest director on site.

The 0 doesn't have to be unanimous except when an entirely wrong manoeuvre was performed.

Example of a wrong manoeuvres: an integrated roll has to start to the inside and starts to the outside, you expect the model inverted on its exit and it's upright ... then you might also think about the following one!

A flight is an exhibition, a pilot is presenting his abilities and skills in front of you, that means that you have to be able to see the planes properly. If you don't see well you can't score well. For instance if the model is too far away you must downgrade.

If for a reason independent from the pilot's will you can not see the whole manoeuvre, don't

score it, use N/O (Non Observed).

For instance a cloud is passing and hides the plane: use N/O, you're sneezing and your eyes are closed during a snap: use N/O... Be fair, judge what you see.

If the sun is in the flying zone, the pilot would have to deal with it and adapt the positioning of the plane according to where the sun is.

## DIFFICULTY OF THE SCHEDULES

After some practice you'll see that it's not more difficult to judge a F schedule than a Clubman one, as long as you know them when you seat in the chair. Pilots are challenged the same way if they fly in the proper category.

Then again keep your judging standards, be consistent.

There's a fair progression through the schedules, they are designed to progressively introduce higher challenges.

Trust me, they do their job to qualify the best pilots for the final rounds and the P and F schedules are not randomly called preliminary and final.

## GETTING READY FOR A JUDGING DAY

Before heading to a contest you have to think about how to pack your bag.

You're going to sit (outside for F3A) during several hours, facing all kinds of weather.

According to the Sporting Code strong wind is a reason to interrupt a contest, not rain except if it creates bad visibility. Then be ready to sit in the rain.

If you can, bring a good chair with you, it's important to be comfortable.

Have clothes for hot, cold, dry and wet conditions, you can meet all the seasons in a same day.

Protect your eyes and skin.

To judge well you have to feel well:

If your feet are wet and cold you will not do well.

If you're soaking wet you will not do well.

If you're hungry or thirsty you will not do well, bring snacks and drinks.

If you had too much coffee or drinks, require a break...

You'll have to stay focus for a significant amount of time.

It's important to be able to relax, manage breaks to keep your concentration.

It's not physical but you might feel tired at the end of the day.

## FLYING AREA

The manoeuvring zone is vertically spread in front of and at a distance of approximately 150 m from the pilot. It is laterally limited by two virtual vertical planes above the extension of two lines on the ground each at an angle of 60 degrees left and right from the intersection of a centre line with the safety line. The centre line is positioned on the ground perpendicular to the safety line on the ground which is parallel to the runway. Two starting circles of 3m diameter are marked on the middle of the runway, one left and one right at minimum 15 m off the centre line, also serving for sound/noise measurement, if required. The upper limit of the manoeuvring zone is defined by the virtual plane stretching up 60 degrees from the ground at the intersection of all ground lines.

The manoeuvring zone is not framed with walls around it, then if a model goes outside keep judging the manoeuvre and deduct another downgrade proportionally to the part outside the

box.

Outside the box means to the left, to the right and above, for this last one your neck will tell you...

NOW YOU'RE ABOUT TO START...

WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO DO?

Be fair, be honest with you, be honest with the pilots and the organisers.

Annex 5B.4

Accurate and consistent judging.

Whatever your understanding and interpretation of the sporting code is, as soon as you start to evaluate mistakes always give the same downgrade to the same mistake and treat the pilots equally, regardless how famous they are or how fancy their planes are or not.