

SSA-SANCTIONED SOARING CONTEST PILOT REQUIREMENTS

The SSA Competition Rules describe the requirements that pilots must meet to enter a Sanctioned soaring contest. These requirements are summarized here, for your convenience. Please refer to the Rules for full details and authority.

General requirements

- Be a member of the SSA
- Hold a valid glider license
- Have a registered, airworthy sailplane to fly
- Know and be prepared to follow the applicable Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs)
- Know and be prepared to follow the SSA Competition Rules

Pilot Ranking Score

At the end of each year the SSA compiles a Pilot Ranking List, which assigns a ranking score to every pilot that has entered an SSA-sanctioned soaring competition in the previous three years. A prospective entrant's ranking score is taken either from this list or from the results of a contest in the current calendar year (provided this produces a better ranking score). A pilot without a ranking score is assigned a score of zero.

The current Pilot Ranking list can be found on John Leibacher's Soaring Services website, at soaring.aerobatics.ws.

Experience requirements

Any pilot with a ranking score greater than zero (thus showing that the pilot participated in a recent sanctioned competition) is considered eligible for any competition. Pilots without a ranking score can qualify as follows:

To enter a Sport-Class Regional Contest:

- Have earned a Silver badge

To enter an FAI-class Regional Contest:

- Have earned a Silver badge and the Gold Badge distance leg

To enter National contests:

- Show evidence of having completed a previous National soaring competition and of recent cross-country soaring experience
- Foreign pilots may qualify by having an FAI Gold badge and presenting evidence of experience in soaring competition

How to apply for entry to a contest

The first step is to consult the Contests section of the SSA website (www.ssa.org) to learn about the location, dates, competition classes, etc. of an upcoming contest you are considering. You will also find information on how to contact the contest organizers.

To be considered a prospective entrant, you must send the following to the contest organizers:

- Your SSA membership number, valid through the end of the competition
- Evidence of meeting experience requirements (described above)
- Declaration of the competition class you wish to enter
- The \$100 entry deposit
- A pilot ranking score obtained in the current calendar year (if better than the one taken from the current Pilot Ranking List)

- If you are a foreign pilot (see below), your country of citizenship

Your date of entry application is the date on which the organizers have received *all* of these items.

Entry types

All entrants are either regular entrants or guests. Guests are either foreign pilots competing in a US National competition or any pilot who wishes to fly just part of a competition and has made a prior arrangement with contest organizers. Guest pilots are scored, but their results do not affect the scores of regular entrants. Guests are not eligible to be declared the contest winner or to receive tangible awards (trophies and medallions). Guests must still meet all entry requirements, be members of the SSA, pay the Sanction fee and other agreed-on fees, and follow all rules.

Team entries are those for which more than one pilot will act as pilot-in-command. Each pilot must qualify and register, and the CD must be informed each day as to which pilot will be flying. Team entries are allowed in Regional and Sport National contests, but not in FAI-Class National contests.

Flying a glider that will carry more than one person constitutes a multiplace entry. The pilot is free to take passengers of his choice, or to fly solo (provided weight requirements are met each day). Multiplace entries are allowed in any contest and class whose rules they meet. A multiplace entry is not the same as a team entry, though it could be one if more than one qualified pilot registered and if the pilot-in-command were designated to the CD each day. The team pilots could fly together each day, or could take turns flying with passengers.

Entry priority

All contests set and announce an upper limit to the number of entrants. If more pilots wish to enter, there are rules by which priority is determined.

Priority is based on a prospective entrant's Pilot Ranking score (described above). For all contests except a Sports-class Regional contest, the ranking score represents the pilot's entry priority (higher is better). For a Sport-class regional contest, priority for at least some of the entry slots is determined by subtracting the ranking score from 100 (thus giving lower-ranking pilots higher priority).

The date that is 60 days prior to the start of the contest is known as the Preferential Entry Deadline. Entries received prior to this are ranked by entry priority, and pilots are admitted to the contest in this order. For a Regional contest, entries from pilots who reside within the region are processed ahead of those from pilots outside the region.

Any excess of applicants at the Preferential Entry Deadline forms a standby list, in order by entry priority. Later applicants are added to this list in order by application date. Entry slots open after the Preferential Entry Deadline, are filled in order from this list.

Foreign pilots

A foreign pilot is one who is not a US Citizen or Resident Alien (as defined by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service). Foreign pilots are fully eligible to be regular entrants in Regional contests – they can be declared the winner and take home trophies and medallions. In US National contests, they fly as guests.

Foreign pilots must meet the same entry requirements that apply to all pilots. They must be SSA members and must follow US competition rules and Federal Aviation Regulations. They need not hold a permanent US pilot's license – they can substitute the equivalent license or certification from their country, with the appropriate US endorsement.

Foreign pilots that have flown in a sanctioned US contest from which they obtained a Pilot Ranking Score are eligible for preferential entry in the same way as US pilots. Preferential entry for up to two additional positions is available to foreign pilots that have not flown in a US contest: one per country ranked by date of application. Other qualified foreign pilots may fly if space is available.

What to bring to a contest

This list shows requirements contained in – or in some cases implied by – contest Rules (it is obviously not a complete list of all contest-related items):

- Picture ID (now required of all pilots by the FAA)
- A valid pilot's license with Private or Commercial Glider privileges (foreign pilots see above)
- A registered, airworthy glider that meets the rules of the competition class you plan to enter
- All the paperwork that makes the glider legal to fly (Registration, Certificate of Airworthiness, etc.)
- Proof that you own the glider, or written permission from the owner (on the SSA Pilot Registration Form)
- An aviation-band radio for the glider that receives and transmits on 123.3 and 123.5 Mhz
- A parachute for each seat in the glider, packed within 120 days of the scheduled end of the contest (or a ballistic parachute system approved by the glider manufacturer)
- If you are entering a contest for which the organizers have announced that Emergency Locator Transmitters will be required, an impact-activated ELT
- If you will be a minor on the first scheduled flying day (practice or competition), permission of your parent or guardian (on the SSA Pilot Registration Form)
- Proof of liability insurance coverage for the glider (a photocopy of the first page of the policy is the best form of this)

To be a valid entrant, you must appear at the competition site, complete and sign the Contest Registration Form, and pay the full entry fee prior to 9:00 am of the first scheduled competition day.