ALES-F5J Comparison and Strategy Tutorial Outline

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This outline is intended to be used as a handout and talking outline with the purpose of informing new pilots about the difference between ALES and F5J FAI rules. Please feel free to suggest revisions and improvements. Thanks. --*Chris Bajorek*

Notes

1. Tutorial Overview

Assumption: clubs want to follow most FAI rules

- i.e. goal is to <u>not</u> water down F5J and make it more like ALES
- For a rules summary see the F5J FAI Rules tutorial

Part 1: Comparing AMA ALES to FAI F5J

Part 2: F5J Contest Strategy

Comparing ALES to F5J

This section discusses key differences between ALES and F5J rules

2. Flight Groups

ALES: the way flight groups are determined varies from club to club.

F5J: groups for all rounds are drawn before the contest starts

- This tends to equally allocate a pilot's flights against as many competitors as possible
- FAI goal is to arrive at the fairest contest ranking
- The pilot matrix is posted so you can see who you're flying against

3. Launches

AMA ALES: gives everyone the same cutoff altitude and/or 30 sec max motor run

F5J: Start Height penalty and 30 sec max motor run

Penalty = 0.5 pnt/mtr up to 200mtr + 3 pnt/mtr above 200mtr

e.g. start height of 202mtr would yield penalty of 106 points

100pnt penalty if start motor before start signal

4. Flight Time Window

AMA ALES: 10 second launch window

10min Working Time and no penalty for overflying the end signal

F5J: Time starts at start signal

10min Working Time, zero land score if you overfly the end signal

15min Working Time for fly-off rounds

5. Landings

AMA ALES: zero landing if plane is damaged, touches anyone in flight, sheds parts, or flips over

F5J: zero landing if plane touches pilot or helper, or if it overflies the end signal

6. AMA ALES Zero flights/Penalties

Zero flight if caught zooming, exceeding cutoff height by 10%, restarting motor, launching outside launch window, causing disturbance by redirecting launch path, or 2nd violation of safety zones

Zero landing if plane is damaged, sheds parts, lands inverted, or touches the pilot

7. F5J Zero flights/Penalties

Start Height penalty: 0.5 pnt/mtr up to 200mtr + 3 pnt/mtr above 200mtr

Zero flight if: shed parts, nose of plane lands >75mtr from land spot, launch >4mtr from land spot, overfly end signal by 1min or more, AMRT cannot display start height, motor restart during flight

Notes

(allowed deviation for F5J USA Tour events)

Landings: Zero landing if you overfly the Working Time end signal

PENALTIES:

- Motor start before start signal: 100pnts
- Infringement of Safety Area - 300 pnts
- Plane hits person in Access Corridor - 1000pnts
- Launch or land direction violation: 100 pnts
- Motor starts before start signal: 100 pnts

8. Scoring Normalization

AMA ALES: Duration scores are normalized, then landing points added to that. 1050 pnts max per round

F5J: Total round scores are normalized i.e. duration + landing - start height penalty. 1000 pnts max per round

9. Reflights

AMA ALES: there are no reflights permitted

F5J: Pilots can claim a reflight if in-flight collision happens or if flight was hindered by "unexpected event"

Notes

F5J Strategy

This section discusses some key F5J strategy topics

10. Main differences between ALES and F5J

Launch height penalty

Easier to think of this as a low launch bonus

Working Time end penalty

Make sure you don't land late or you lose landing points!

Practicing with a talking timer helps a lot

11. Landing points versus low launch points

Low launches add another scoring dimension

In good thermal conditions low launches make a difference i.e. when everyone gets their duration and landing

Landings are more challenging with the overfly penalty

12. Standings printed and posted after every round

Important input to your strategy

Lets you decide how aggressive to be in subsequent rounds

Separate reports for total points, landings, and launch height

Notes

13. If you are a contest beginner

Then don't try for low launches

If thermals are scarce at least get to 200mtr in 30 secs

Remember, there is no limit on launch height, just a points penalty

Get your duration first, then get a landing if you can

Save low launch height attempts for when you get more experience

14. Choosing your launch height

Early versus later rounds

Best to fly "just well enough" to make the fly-offs

Daring low altitude launches best saved for fly-offs (unless you love gambling)

If no fly-offs then save your daring for later rounds

15. Launch flight speed

The faster you fly the harder it is to see "thermal bumps"

Optimum F5J launch speed can be slower

When you are trying to find a low thermal bubble

Make sure your motor does not cut off when flying at slowest speed

16. Handling late launches

Example 1: initial motor spinup failure, launch late

(a) Can land within Working Time limit, get landing points but lose duration points

(b) Or can overfly Working Time by up to 59 seconds, lose landing points. *No* duration points after end signal.

Example 2: intentional delay to see where others go

Not advisable since you will lose duration points and possibly landing points too

Notes

17. How to be a good F5J timer

Do everything the same as for ALES but also:

- **Be silent during Working Time end signal countdown (i.e. avoid overflying)**

18. Watch for low “gaggles”

Especially in later rounds

Likely that multiple pilots will try to circle in the same low bubble

Be prepared to split off and find a “safer” thermal

19. Questions?