

2015 US Club, 18 Meter and Open Class Nationals Hobbs, New Mexico

Contest Procedures

(revised 29-May-2015)

AIRSPACE

A diagram of the contest area is shown on the following page.

Within the area occupied by contest turnpoints, the currently closed airspace is:

- the Class C airspace around the airports at Midland TX (MAF), Lubbock TX (LBB) and Amarillo TX (AMA).
- P-47, which lies mostly within the AMA Class C
- to the northwest lie two adjacent Restricted areas: R5104A and R5105.

Pilots must stay out of closed airspace at all times – even if a declared Turn Area happens to overlap it. Note that for scoring purposes, **closed airspace has no upper limit**. The penalty for incursion into closed airspace is very severe. As of 2010 rules, pilots may fly under closed airspace.

Again, for the entire period of the contest, this airspace is always considered closed.

The current level of military operations in the task area appears to be low. The contest will be in touch with nearby controlling authorities, and notes on military operations may be presented at morning pilot meetings

Note that additional airspace may be closed on specific days (TFRs etc). If such is the case an announcement will be made at the daily pilot's meeting.

OPERATIONS

Note: Field diagrams are show on the following pages

General

Hobbs Industrial Airpark (3707' MSL) is a former military airfield with a number of former and current runways. Most contest operations take place either on the large ramp, or on Runway 12-30 (which lies parallel to and just southwest of the ramp). In this document, "the runway" refers to Runway 12-30.

The northeast edge of this ramp is used for glider and trailer parking, and is home to some buildings. The southwest side of the ramp is used for contest launches and landings. During landings, a "dead line" (marked by a change in pavement color) is enforced along the ramp: as noted below, landing gliders should roll clear to the northeast, but not past this line. The area southwest of this line must be kept clear during all flight operations.

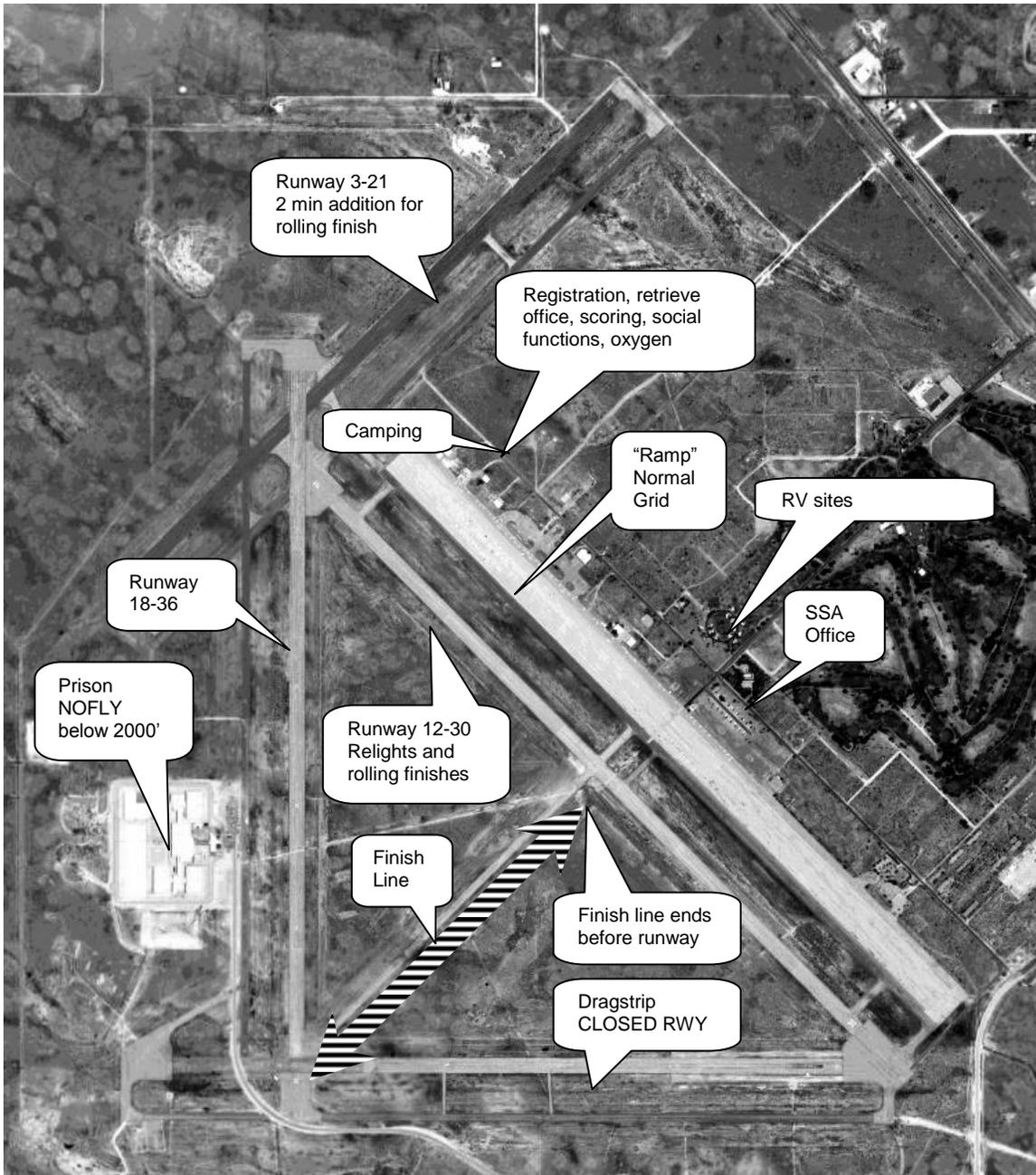
The western side of the airfield is the site of a prison, whose grounds extend east to include part of the taxiway west of Runway 18-36. Pilots should avoid flying over prison grounds at altitudes below 2000'. The north-south runway is landable.

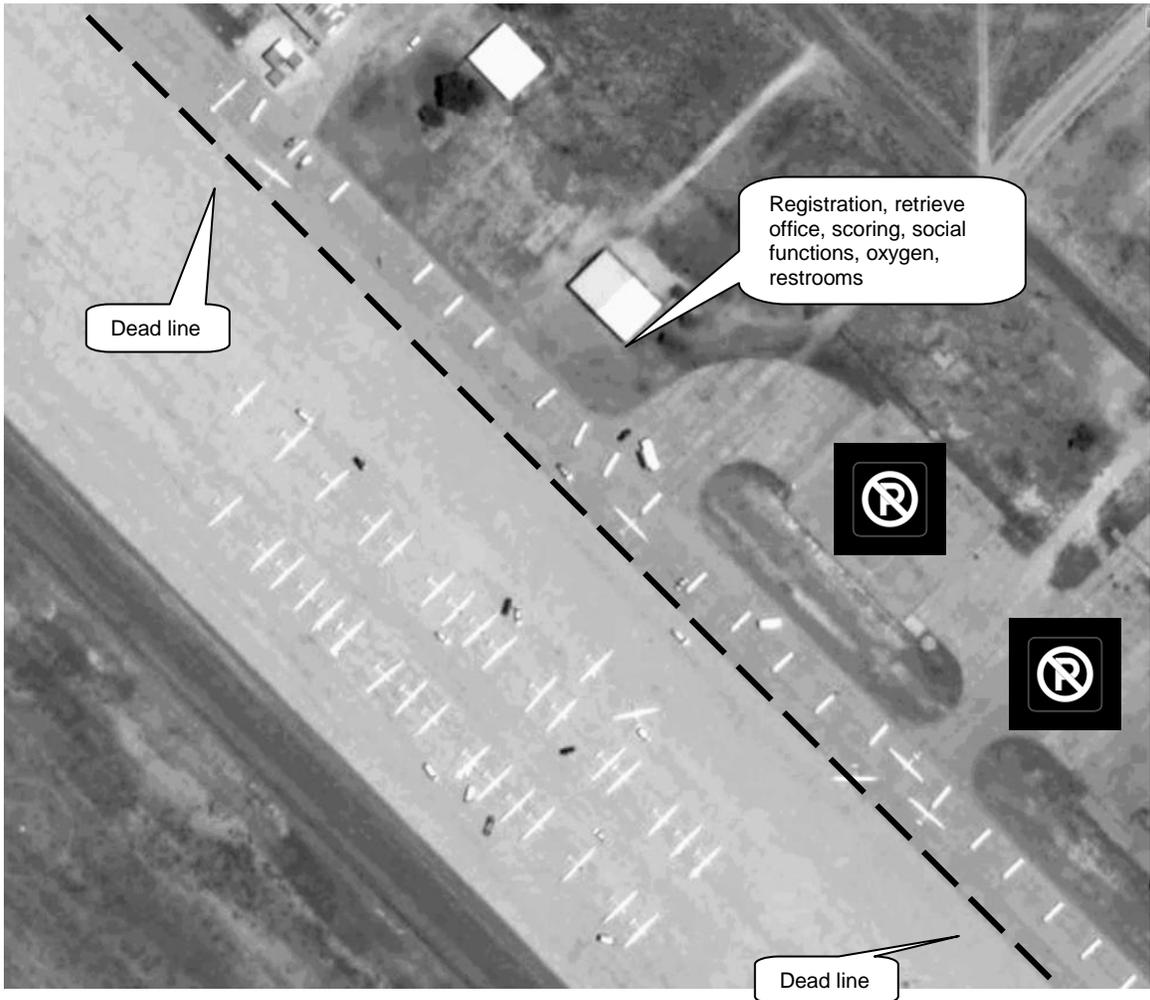
The former east-west runway at the south edge of the airfield is now used as a dragstrip; it is not landable.

Some contest functions (e.g. registration and the coordination of retrieves) take place in the Retrieve Office, located on the northwest side of the northwest hangar. Other functions (e.g. scoring) may take place in the SSA Headquarters building, located about 300 yards southeast of the Retrieve Office.

The contest radio frequency will be 123.3 Mhz. Pilot-crew communications use 123.5 Mhz.

Field Diagrams





Mandatory Pilot Safety Meeting

The time and place of the mandatory pilot's meeting is shown on the home page of the website.

Daily Pilot Meetings

Formal pilot meetings will take place in Heidel Hall at the New Mexico Junior College, located on the southwest side of Highway 18, about a mile southeast of Hobbs Industrial Airpark.

Starting on the first official practice day, a daily pilots meeting will be held at 10:00 am. Meetings will normally last about 30 minutes and include the announcement of previous day winners, operational notes, a safety presentation, a weather briefing, etc.

As noted below, another brief pilot meeting will normally be held at the front of the grid.

Gridding

At either end of the ramp, numbers are marked on the pavement, noting where the wheel of a glider should be placed in preparation for launching. Each glider is assigned a grid number each day; assigned numbers rotate after every valid contest day.

Glider may be gridded as early as the pilot wishes. All gliders should be on their assigned grid number no later than the announced grid time (typically, noon). Most commonly, gliders will be gridded at the northwest end of the ramp and take off to the southeast. Grid positions are widely spaced, which makes gridding easy.

The Competition Director (CD) will normally hold a meeting of all pilots at the front of the grid about 10-15 minutes after grid time. There will be time for pilots at the back of the grid to walk to this meeting without rushing.

Vehicles are allowed on and near the grid area. But they must be moved clear of the grid after the front-of-the-grid pilots meeting. The CD will announce when vehicles may depart the grid area.

Critical Assembly Check

A critical assembly check (CAC) is a verification that items the pilot considers critical to flight safety are correct prior to takeoff. Completion of the CAC is indicated by initials or a mark on the wing root tape, preferably on the left side of the glider near the leading edge.

A CAC will be required at this contest: After gridding, gliders will be checked; a glider without a mark on the wing root tape will receive a warning on first occurrence and a 10 point administrative penalty for any subsequent occurrence..

Launching

The launch will begin at a time designated by the CD (normally at least 15 minutes after the end of the front-of-the grid meeting). Once underway, it is essential that no one other than launch personnel be in front of the sailplane next due to be launched, and that all vehicles are well clear.

Towplanes will taxi in front of the next glider to be launched and line crew will hook up the rope. Pilots are expected to be ready in all respects to launch as soon as the towrope is hooked up. In practice, this means that the pilot must be in the cockpit with all checks complete when fourth in line for launch. If for any reason you are not ready to launch when you are third in line, the line crew will push you off the grid and you can launch later, using the relaunch procedures (see below).

The launch crew will look to see that spoilers are in a safe position: either closed and locked, or open with the pilot's hand on the spoiler control. Pilots that wish to use spoilers during the initial takeoff roll should have their spoilers at least half-open; movement -- "bouncing" the spoilers -- confirms that the pilot has control of them.

Tows will be to 2000' AGL, and to a place designated by the CD; glider pilots are expected to release promptly when tow release altitude is reached. It is not normally necessary or desirable for a glider pilot to talk to a towpilot. It is encouraged, but not required, for the pilot to establish communication with the tow-pilot upon hook-up. It is important that the radio call include the towplane's ID, so it is not misunderstood to apply to other towplanes that may be in the air.

Relaunching

Glider pilots that need to relaunch should land on the runway and roll clear to its northeast side. When ready to re-launch, the pilot should inform the CD, who will keep track of the order of requested relaunches.

Relaunches take place in this order, and begin after the last launch in the class. Gliders that have landed on the main runway will be launched from there – they need not be moved onto the ramp.

Crews willing to assist with relaunching pilots may drive onto the runway, but only with the permission of (and possibly with an escort by) contest personnel. The vehicle route onto the runway will normally be from the back of the grid.

Start

Starts will be from one of five different start cylinders, as assigned by the CD and noted as part of each task. All start cylinders will have a radius of five miles. **The Maximum Start Height (MSH) will be specified on the task sheet. All thermaling turns shall be to the left within any active start cylinder or within 5 miles of the Hobbs Airport.**

Gate finish

The location of the gate coincides with the mid-field taxiway that lies southwest of and perpendicular to the center of Runway 12-30. **Note that the finish gate ends at the runway edge – a glider that flies along the runway will miss the northeast edge of the gate.**

A valid gate finish must pass through the gate at least 50' above the ground in the direction specified by the CD as part of the task (either northwest or southeast). A finisher then needs enough energy for a pullup and a safe landing.

Rules specify a radio call on 123.3 MHz when 4 miles from the center of the gate. Other radio calls are appropriate when they will improve safety. Otherwise, keep radio chatter to a minimum so as not to block the calls of others.

Cylinder finish

The finish cylinder is 2 miles in radius, centered on the published finish point. Pilots should finish at or above the minimum altitude of 4500' MSL, then return to the field for landing.

Rules specify a radio call on 123.3 MHz when 4 miles from the center of the cylinder, and again when entering the finish cylinder. Other radio calls are appropriate when they will improve safety. Otherwise, keep radio chatter to a minimum so as not to block the calls of others.

Landing after finishing

Normal post-task landings take place on the southwest side of the ramp. But **rolling finishers should land on the runway, not the ramp,** as described below. Unusual conditions may dictate a landing elsewhere on the field, at the pilot's discretion.

Having landed on the ramp, pilots should roll clear to the northeast. But they must **take care to stop short of the "dead line" where the pavement changes color:** Gliders that roll past the dead line are subject to an Unsafe Operation penalty: safety requires that gliders be moved by hand when past the dead line.

Rolling finish

An alternative to a finish through the Gate is the rolling finish. A pilot who touches down anywhere on a paved runway is scored for a finish when the glider stops rolling (**rolling finishes on Runway 03-21 are subject to a time adjustment of 2 minutes**). There is no requirement to roll to any specific location, but a rolling finish that isn't done safely is subject to a penalty. In particular, a rolling finisher has the same duty as any pilot to roll clear of the runway.

Rolling finishes should not use the ramp, as this can lead to congestion (any pilot able to reach the ramp should also be able to land on Runway 12-30). Under unusual circumstances (e.g. the runway is blocked), a rolling finish on the ramp is acceptable.

Contest Sunset

The official contest sunset time for the 2015 contest is 7:45 pm local time

Retrieves

If you land somewhere other than Hobbs, the rules require that you fill out a Landing Card and telephone the Retrieve Office. If you call without having filled out your card, the Retrieve Office will ask you to do so and call back later. Only if it is truly impractical to find a usable telephone should you attempt to relay landing information via another pilot.

You must either have a designated crew or make some arrangement (probably with another crewless pilot) to deal with the possibility of a landout. It is not reasonable to expect the Retrieve Office to do this for you.

When the Retrieve Office hears from a pilot that has landed out, they will summon the crew by means of a radio call on 123.5 – or a phone call to a number that the crew has left at the Retrieve Office. If the crew does not respond, it becomes the crew's responsibility to check with the Retrieve Office: retrieve cards for outlanded pilots will be posted in a window.

If you are able to reach your crew directly by phone, it is a good plan to give them your Landing Card information and to make arrangements for the retrieve. **But either you or your crew must relay this information to the Retrieve Office before the retrieve begins. Expect a penalty if your crew sets out before this is done.**

Outlanded pilots and retrieving crews are encouraged to call the Retrieve Office when they are together. But the Retrieve Office will close when all pilots are accounted for and crews are dispatched to retrieve those who landed out -- or 7:30 pm, whichever is later. If 7:30 is approaching and crew and pilot are not in contact, one or the other should call to request that the Retrieve Office stay open. Having done this, you must then call when together, so the Retrieve Office can be closed.

Aero retrieves for 2015 will be available at a cost of \$190/hour (based on the Hobbs meter) with a \$100 minimum - you'll pay your tow pilot directly. You must be at an airfield, and there must be ample time to complete the retrieve before sunset. If you fail to supply the Retrieve Office with complete and correct information (e.g. you give the name of an airfield different from the one where you actually landed), expect to pay for any and all flying that becomes necessary.

Airfields

Per Rule 10.10. 3, a landing at an airfield depicted on a current Sectional chart is eligible for an Airfield Landing Bonus. A separate document entitled Airfield Notes provides a list of fields that are exceptions (they are on some charts, but are not fully acceptable for glider operations).

Scoring

A valid flight log is required daily from every pilot who makes a launch on that day, whether or not they claim any distance. The penalty for not turning in a log by 9am on the following day is 100 points. Missing flight logs can affect other contestants scores and relative standings, not just your own. In prior years missing flight logs have resulted in the wrong person receiving an award.

Note that a valid Flight Log must include the pilot's name and contest ID. Files in IGC format are preferred unless different arrangements with the Scorer have been made. Also note that the Scorer has the right to request that a pilot re-transfer a flight log in the Scorer's presence as late as the morning after a flight.

The Scoring Office is located in the Retrieve Office. Pilots should bring their flight documentation (Landing Cards if applicable and Flight Logs) to a desk located just inside the north door. Please ensure that all disks, memory cards, etc are labeled with a valid contest ID and pilot name.

If submitting a memory card/stick/floppy, please have your flight log in

- **The root directory of your memory card/stick/floppy or**
- **In a subdirectory names "FLIGHTS" directly under the root directory**

Note that the Rules require that flight documentation be submitted promptly upon a landing at Hobbs (the **Flight Documentation Interval will be 1 hour**). Pilots who land elsewhere should turn in flight documentation when they return to Hobbs (provided the Scoring Office is still open), but in no case later than 9:00 am the next day.

If scoring is to be done remotely rather than on-site, you will be given the email address to use to send your logs to and any specific instructions at the mandatory pilots meeting. Please remember to put your contest ID in the subject line of any emails. If a Task Claim Form is required (e.g. MAT), put the information in the body of the email.

MISCELLANEOUS

Registration

Entrants will register in the Retrieve Office. No flying is to be done prior to registration.

Parking

Parking slots are located along the northeast edge of the ramp – first come, first served. Parked gliders and trailers must be tied down – wind can be a problem at Hobbs. Strong metal tiedown rings are embedded in the ramp pavement; you may need loops of rope to feed through them.

Vehicles

Autos, RVs, vans, motorhomes, etc. are welcome at the contest. They may be parked on the ramp, provided they do not impede access to hangars or aircraft. They are expected to be operated safely and in a way that does not interfere with others; the speed limit is 20 mph. They should not use the southwest side of the ramp when flight operations are underway, except in accordance with the procedures described above.

Unless your vehicle is parked well away from any area of contest operations, you must take care that you do not block such operations. If there is any possibility your vehicle might be in the way, move it or show others who might be affected how to do so. Remember that flight-related operations in all cases have priority.

Ablutions

Toilets and showers are located adjacent to the Retrieve Office. All associated with the contest are welcome to use these facilities – first come, first served. As there are no professional cleaning services, please do your best to keep things tidy.

Two porta-potties are located at the northwest end of the ramp, close to the grid.

Water

Water ballast is available from spigots located along the northeast edge of the ramp, where gliders and trailers are parked. To reduce the peak load on the water supply, pilots capable of doing so are encouraged to obtain their ballast the evening before a flight.

Drinking water can be obtained from the same spigots: All water supplied on the field is safe to drink

Weighing

Scales will be located at the front of the grid. All Club Class gliders must be weighed prior to the official start of the contest. Additionally each day, pilots who stand in the 5 top places overall must come to the scales to be weighed prior to gridding.

Battery Charging

Outlets are available in the hangar adjacent to the Retrieve Office. Please do not charge batteries in the Retrieve Office or the bathrooms.

Oxygen

As flights altitudes that require the use of supplementary oxygen are reasonably common at Hobbs, oxygen fills are available on the field.

If you prefer to remove your bottle for filling, bring it to the hangar adjacent to the Retrieve Office and give it to the designated person who will fill it. Note that bottles must be labeled with the owner's contest ID and name – unlabeled bottles will not be filled.

For those who can't easily remove their oxygen bottles, a mobile oxygen cart sign-up sheet is posted in the Retrieve Office. Mobile fills will be available in the evening after flying and in the morning before gridding (but please try to avoid the need for last-minute fills).

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted at any contest function, inside any building nor around any aircraft. Smokers are expected to police butts – both their own and others'.

Children and pets

Children on the ramp must be supervised by an adult; the CD will designate a safe area for children to ride bikes and other vehicles. Bicycles should be parked on grass, not on pavement.

Pets are permitted on the field, but must be on a leash at all times. Pets are not permitted at pilot meetings or at any event at which food is served. Owners are expected to clean up after their animals.

Field cleanup

A glider contest generates a lot of trash - please take care to clean up yours. And since you are sure occasionally to miss something, each day pick up one or two items that aren't yours – this way, the field will stay clean.

Trash cans are located at various points on and near the ramp. A dumpster is located in the dirt parking lot near the NSF hangars.

Safety comments

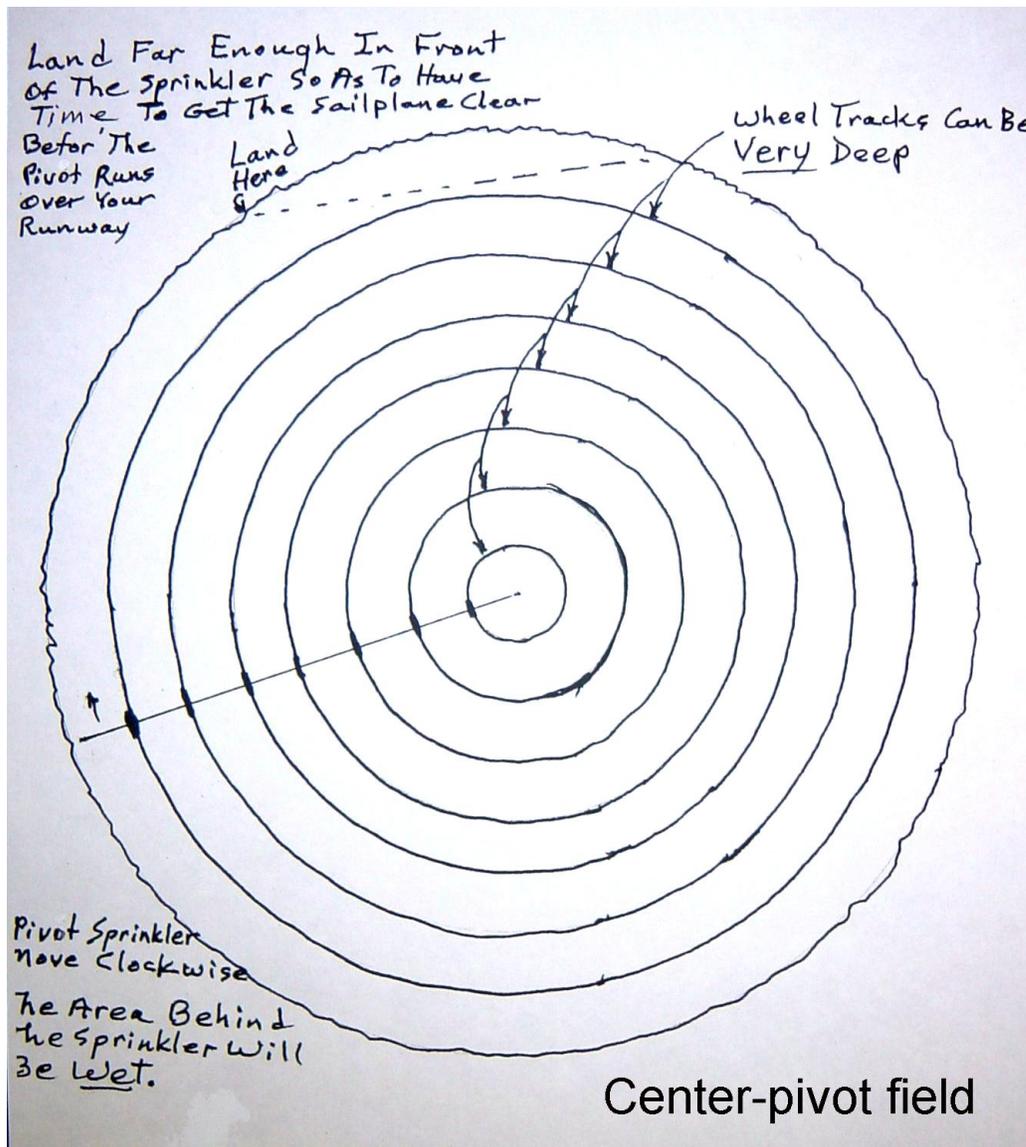
These are welcome at any time from any contest participant – pilots, crews and others. Anonymous written comments can be placed in the Safety Box, located in the Retrieve Office.

Irrigated Field Briefing

In much of the task area, irrigated fields may represent good places to land. For best results, it is important to understand how typical irrigation systems work. Three systems are in common use: center-pivot irrigation, wheel-line irrigation, and fixed-line irrigation. Each is discussed below.

Center-pivot fields

These are easily recognized – they are round (though some are just part of a circle). Most lie within a quarter-section (half-mile-square) field, whose total area is 160 acres. As the name suggests, the system consists of a large arm (the

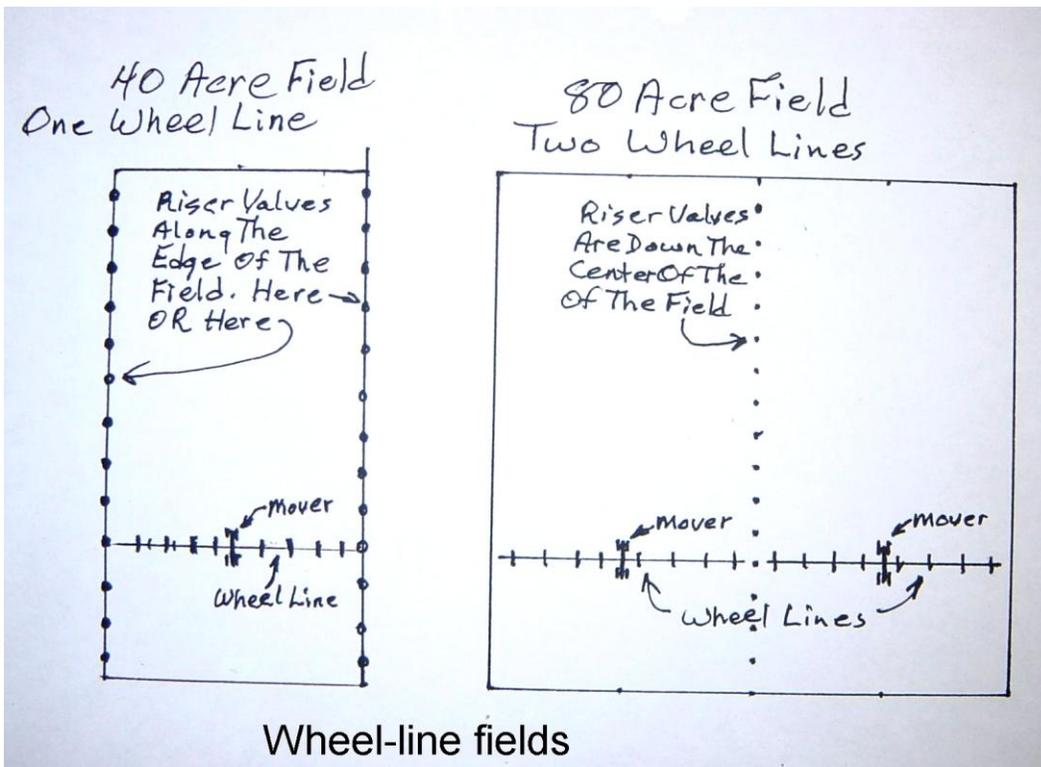


length is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile) pivoted at the center of the field, carried by several (often 9) wheeled supports. This results in a series of concentric rings (typically around 150' wide), separated by deep wheel tracks.

The pivoting arm will usually be moving clockwise, making one circuit of the field in about 24 hours. (Fields that allow less than a complete circle will have an arm that moves in both directions, like a windshield wiper.) The area around and behind the arm will be wet; the best place to land will usually be in the outer ring, at least 90 degrees ahead of the arm. This should allow enough time to move the glider before the arm arrives.

Wheel-line fields

These fields are rectangular, with an area that is usually some multiple of 40 acres. They are irrigated by a wheeled arm that moves in a straight line. They are fed water from a series of riser pipes that lie either along the edge (for smaller fields) or down the center of the field. The riser pipes may not be visible from the air, but they are typically surrounded by longer grass that will be apparent. When the arm has irrigated one strip of the field, it is manually moved to the next riser pipe.



The best place to land is in the largest open area of the field, staying clear of the irrigation arm and the riser pipes. When convenient, land parallel to the wheel tracks, but note that these are shallow enough that wind or available space may dictate a landing across them. Though it's best not to finish close to the arm, being overrun should not be a problem, as a person has to move it.

During the subsequent retrieve, it is important for vehicles to stay clear of the riser pipes: they are not always highly visible, and they are easily damaged by a car or trailer.

Fixed-line fields

This system is similar to wheel-line irrigation, except the irrigation line is not on wheels, but lies on the ground. It connects to riser pipes in much the same way as a wheel-line system. This scheme is more treacherous, because it has small vertical sprinkler heads that are much less apparent than a wheel-line arm would be.

Landing in such a field is about the same as in a wheel-line field. But here there will be no wheel tracks, so there is even less preference for landing direction.