

Report British Open 2023 - Points to work on for WPEC 2024

In my position as monitor for the 1st World Paramotor Endurance Championship 2024 I want to give my feedback about the British Open 2023 Championships which was held on the same location by mainly the same team as the World Championship 2024 will be.

I participated in this competition as a competitor in the Open Footlaunch Class like I already did in 2019, 2020 and 2022 before.

I try to describe my experience and perspective as best as possible, and mention everything that I believe is important to take care of for future competitions.

The location is easy to reach also for international pilots because it's very close to the ferry in Dover.

The field is very big for camping and also for flying activities.

The toilets were full a bit earlier than expected but they organized a refreshment quickly.

Showers have been perfect.

Points to solve/improve:

The official FlyMaster Trackers created some problems. Several pilots lost scoring for complete flights or days because the trackers didn't work properly.

➤ It should definitely be advised to all competitors to bring their own backup trackers and it should be specified exactly which systems can be used as backup trackers. Another option would be to offer the pilots to rent a second tracker from the organization.

The scoring took way too long and had way too many mistakes. Some tasks were only able to be scored and published after 1-2 days and the final result was only published in the early morning of the prize giving day.

So there was only a very short time window to check the published scores and complain about mistakes. I also noticed that several points were not scored and had only a chance to do so because I had my own backup tracker and a computer with google earth.

➤ I advise using the tracklogs from 2023 and simulate the scoring of a comp with this data to identify the problems and make sure it works better in 2024.

This is a major problem/risk for the world championship and we need to make sure it's solved before. I recommend that the scoring team shows the monitors or other officials till the end of first quarter 2024 a solution.

At classic competitions you usually have a briefing after each flight. At the Endurance Format you have most of the briefing time in the evening. To make sure that pilots have the chance to get enough sleep to be fit and firm the next morning, especially the briefings in the evening should start without much delay and should not take too long.

If single pilots don't show up in time it's their problem.

As we enable pilots to go for really long flights, also during the thermal active time, we need to make sure they get enough sleep. Way higher risk for accidents if you fly through turbulent air and didn't get much sleep the nights before.

After the briefing the pilots often need to do map work, plan flights... Because this work can mostly only be done when the flying times for the next day is published.

➤ Pilots should be asked to show high discipline and it should be decided whether a question is interesting for everybody or not. Clear instructions about time windows...

Keep in mind that pilots will get up 2 hours before the flight window opens, so briefing should ideally be finished by 22:00 local time.

Another point that can create problems is when decisions change quickly. When a task window in the evening is canceled, it must stay canceled.

It's dangerous if pilots already open alcoholic beverages after the cancellation and then the window is opened again and they still go to fly.

➤ Should be clearly named if the day is canceled or if it's still possible that another window could be opened.

Competition needs a good mix from Navigation, Precision and Economy.

Otherwise pilots can arrive with 2-3 different setups and decide depending on the forecast if they take a small glider and big engine or big glider and small engine.

Scoring should give only points for what the pilots did. With the normalization to 1000 points a pilot can get 1000 points for being the best in a task by hitting only 1 gate as long as nobody else tried this task.

➤ I expect this to be solved when the new task catalog is published at the Cima Plenary

Value of the different tasks should reflect how difficult it is and how far away from the airfield.

A pure precision navigation that is close to the airfield should not have the same points/km as one far away from the airfield or a declared speed close to the airfield.

Comp Bottle requirements should be specified. The rule says that it can be used when it's officially available for purchase from the manufacturer. But a pilot showed up with a non professional bottle with a fuel pump that looks exactly like the cheap 12V oil pumps that are not allowed to be used with gasoline... He is sponsored by a manufacturer, but it was clear to see that this is no commercially available product but a self made solution.

➤ I recommend extending the task catalog to have a bottle with max 1 Liter, Max 1 piece, needs to have an overflow system to avoid too high pressure inside, if an electric pump is used it must have an official document from the pump manufacturer that it's made for gasoline and not only for oil...

For any questions feel free to contact me

Best Regards and always happy landings
Benedikt Bös