

## PROPOSAL TO IGC PLENARY 2018 YEAR 2

Proposed by Sweden

Affects: Sporting Code 3, definition of Silver Distance in 2.2.1.a and as a consequence introduction of a new flight term “launch point” in 1.2

### PROPOSAL

It is proposed to change the wording from “a straight distance flight of at least 50 km from the release point” to “a straight distance flight to a way point that has a distance of at least 50 km to both the release point and the launch point”.

This makes it necessary to add a definition of the launch point to section 1.2, proposed as follows: “LAUNCH POINT 1.2.13 The WAY POINT where the glider is positioned for launch, found as the last FIX prior to the glider attaining non-zero ground speed with the intention of getting airborne.”

### MOTIVATION

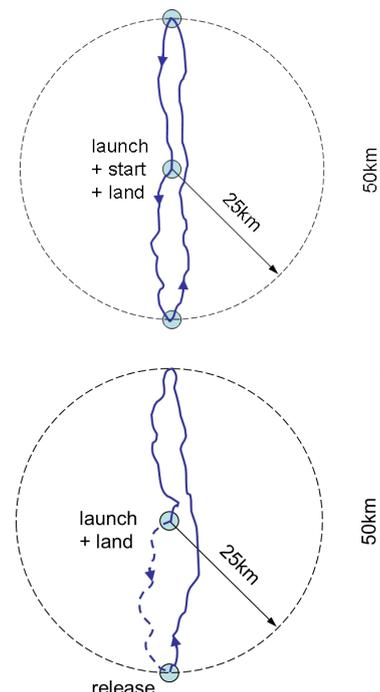
Simply put, we want to make the Silver Distance a true cross-country achievement of 50km again, rather than just 2×25km as it has recently become.

The 2014 version of the Sporting Code 3 defined the Silver Distance in 2.1.1.a as “a flight that includes a leg of at least 50 kilometres. This leg may be part of a longer declared flight. The loss of height (4.4.3) is calculated on the entire flight, not just on the portion claimed.”

In an effort to simplify and also return the Silver Badge requirements to its roots the 2015 version changed the definition to “a straight distance flight of at least 50 km from the release point”. The intention has been to prevent pilots to just fly 25km from the airfield into one direction, then turn 180° and fly 50km into the exact opposite direction, thus achieving a 50km leg within a safe 25km radius from the airfield, i.e. defeating the idea of a true cross-country flight (see upper figure, right).

However this fell short. With the 2015 change measuring 50km from the release point a cross-country averse, yet Silver Badge aspiring pilot now can defeat the intention by either taking a 25km long aerotow or, perhaps less unusual, using the gliders’ MoP (Means of Propulsion) to reach a point 25km away from the airfield. From this release point the pilot can still fly to a point just 25km away from the field in the exact opposite direction, thus achieving a 50km leg within a safe 25km radius from the airfield (see lower figure, right).

It is our intention to plug this hole by invalidating any performances that do not achieve a true distance of 50km or more from the airfield. Referencing the release point, as in the current issue of the Sporting Code 3, makes sure a pilot cannot draw advantage of a long aerotow or using the glider’s MoP in the direction of the turn point. Also referencing the launch point, as in our proposal, assures the pilot having to fly beyond the immediate surroundings of the airfield – an achievement rewarding which has always been the intention with the Silver Distance.



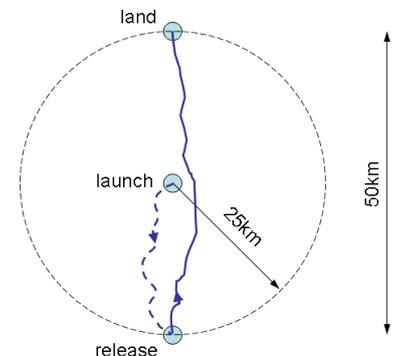
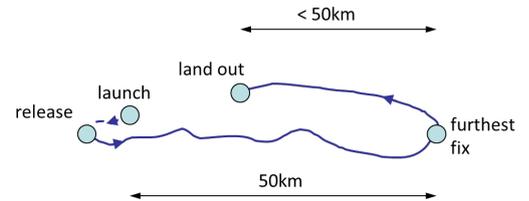
### CHANGES BETWEEN YEAR 1 AND YEAR 2 PROPOSAL

The Year 2 proposal achieves the same result as the Year 1, but it does so in a slightly different way. In the Year 1 proposal the case had been made for turning the Silver Distance definition on its head to

a simple “a course with the flight track including at least one fix with a straight distance of at least 50km to the landing point”. This landing point would have to be defined as a new type of way point, just as the launch point is now to be defined in the Year 2 proposal at hand.

The reason for this deviation between the Year 1 and Year 2 proposal is three-fold:

1. The Sporting Code 3 committee had concerns with respect to the definition of the Silver Distance as proposed in the Year 1. In their informed and therefore by us respected opinion it would not fit into the established structure of definitions.
2. A main reason for the turned-around definition of the Silver Distance in the Year 1 proposal was that it resulted in a straight-forward text. However, there is the arguably frequent case of a pilot not making it back to the field from which launch occurred and where also landing had been intended, but instead landing out on the way back (see right-hand figure). In order to not invalidate this clearly valid achievement an exemption would have to be added to the text, counter-acting the intention of providing a straight-forward formulation of a Silver Distance.
3. With the formulation as in the Year 1 proposal the pilot would still have been allowed to aerotow 25km and fly to a point just 25km away from the field in the exact opposite direction, provided landing at that point. This would not even have to be a proper outlanding as it is quite conceivable that there is a neighboring airfield available in about 25km distance, which would make such an endeavor relatively convenient.



In summary, the Year 1 proposal made it somewhat harder to defeat the spirit of the Silver Badge distance, but it opened another loop hole and also required an exemption in order to not invalidate certain, clearly valid flights. And the way all of this was proposed to achieve seemed somewhat controversial in the eyes of the SC3 committee.

## DISCUSSION

The Year 2 proposal at hand does not upset the Sporting Code 3’s structure of definitions, respecting the SC3 committee’s expert opinion on the Year 1 proposal, but it does require adding a definition for the launch point, proposed as: “LAUNCH POINT 1.2.13 The WAY POINT where the glider is positioned for launch, found as the last FIX prior to the glider attaining non-zero ground speed with the intention of getting airborne.” A consequence of this definition is that this launch point will differ slightly between gliders launching from the same airfield, depending on where exactly the glider had been positioned prior to launch.

An alternative would be to refer to the airfield’s official coordinates instead, which then would have to be defined, too – as well as officially documented somewhere and verified, including later changes. Rather than simplifying this instead adds an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. Also the flight record itself would no longer be sufficient for validation of the performance, which would be another departure from established principles. It appears thus that choosing to introduce and reference the flight’s launch point is the better option.

## REASONS TO SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL

The 2015 attempt at simplification has unfortunately proved inadequate. With our proposal a subtle adjustment is being performed to prevent defeating the spirit of the Silver Badge while keeping established principles in the Sporting Code 3.