

Proposal on the awarding of free distance records

WITH THE RECENT ESTABLISHMENT of an array of new International Records, the Sporting Code Committee thought it appropriate to examine what is taking place within the current record lists to see if there are anomalies which could, and perhaps should, be removed.

The concept of “Free Distance” records were introduced to the IGC in 1994. A major argument for establishing a free record type was that:

- a. there are situations where soaring conditions are much better than expected so a much greater distance could be achieved than the declared course.
- b. given the distances now required to surpass current records, there is a much greater chance that unknowable poor soaring conditions over distant turn point areas many hours after a soaring forecast will prevent a declared task from being completed.

Having had these free records for some years now, the committee thought it reasonable to survey the free distance record results (attached).

Have we got this big difference between pre-declared and free records? The short answer is “no”. The survey illustrates that free distance records in all categories and in a high proportion of the claims are usually only a few km longer than a concurrently claimed pre-declared task. Often, the claimed distance for the free distance record is exactly the same as the declared distance task.

Free record attempts and claims are not generally being made as a response to the presumed reasons for which they were established. What pilots are earning in about half the claims is an additional record for no extra effort – in merchandising terms, “buy one, get one free”.

World records have a cachet, being *“a significant and highly praiseworthy accomplishment requiring unusual effort and skill from the pilot”*. In practice, what is occurring now with a large percentage of Free Distance records fails to meet that definition of superior effort.

Therefore, our committee recommends that either one of two changes be made to correct this by introducing a new paragraph to SC3-1.4.7:

A free distance record and a declared distance record cannot both be claimed for the same flight.

or, if this is not acceptable, then

If a free distance record is to be claimed in conjunction with a declared distance record, it must exceed the declared distance by at least 10%.

Ross Macintyre
Chairman, Sporting Code Committee

**WORLD records (all classes) in which free distance flight claims
have been coupled with declared distance flight claims**

A. Free triangle claims

<i>date</i>	<i>free tri</i>	<i>tri dist</i>	<i>dist diff</i>	<i>% diff</i>	<i>uncoupled free triangle dist</i>	
12-Jan-11	1755.5	1750.6	4.9	0.28		
25-Dec-10	1650.0	1621.0	29.0	1.79	20-May-07	563.4
8-Dec-10	1608.2	1600.2	8.0	0.50	9-Jan-07	1582.8
30-Nov-09	1409.2	1391.9	17.3	1.24	16-Jan-04	1458.6
28-Jun-09	530.1	507.3	22.8	4.49		
23-Jan-07	1376.2	1373.8	2.4	0.17		
23-Nov-06	1568.5	1556.3	12.2	0.78		
3-Dec-05	2193.1	2089.8	103.3	4.94		
13-Dec-03	1508.4	1502.6	5.9	0.39		
25-Dec-98	1409.2	1391.9	17.3	1.24		
25-Dec-98	1037.3	1036.6	0.7	0.07		
11-Dec-98	818.8	778.0	40.8	5.24		
5-Jan-97	796.2	796.2	0.0	0.00		
2-Jan-97	518.1	518.1	0.0	0.00		
26-Dec-96	504.7	504.7	0.0	0.00		
15-Jul-95	382.1	382.1	0.0	0.00		
8-Jan-95	877.9	877.9	0.0	0.00		
<i>totals</i>	19943.5	19679.0	264.6	1.34		

B. Free (straight) distance claims

<i>date</i>	<i>free dist</i>	<i>goal dist</i>	<i>dist diff</i>	<i>% diff</i>	<i>uncoupled free (straight) dist</i>	
4-Dec-04	2192.9	2128.4	64.5	3.03		
9-Jul-04	627.6	560.1	67.5	12.05	9-Jul-10	660.0
24-May-03	156.1	156.1	0.0	0.00	12-Jan-10	2256.9
9-Jan-03	1501.9	1449.3	52.6	3.63	19-Jul-08	791.0
5-Jan-03	1078.2	965.3	112.9	11.70	18-Jul-05	972.0
15-May-99	635.2	574.5	60.7	10.57	23-Nov-03	2174.5
21-Apr-98	508.1	508.1	0.0	0.00	21-Nov-03	1687.0
14-Jun-93	593.9	593.9	0.0	0.00	16-Dec-99	1546.6
6-May-93	1078.1	1078.1	0.0	0.00	1-Jun-93	1394.0
25-Jan-93	1039.9	1039.9	0.0	0.00		
14-Jan-93	539.9	539.9	0.0	0.00		
17-Apr-92	1383.0	1383.0	0.0	0.00		
<i>totals</i>	11334.8	10976.6	358.2	3.26		

C. Free 3TP distance claims

<i>date</i>	<i>free 3TP</i>	<i>*various</i>	<i>dist diff</i>	<i>% diff</i>	<i>uncoupled free 3TP flts</i>			
24-May-03	357.4	312.2	45.2	14.48				
5-Jan-03	1081.2	1078.2	3.0	0.28	10 Dec 10	1051.4	1 Dec 98	778.0
20-Dec-02	1715.5	1708.4	7.1	0.42	25-Apr-09	1002.1	16-Jul-97	887.3
26-Aug-01	220.1	205.9	14.2	6.90	6-Jan-06	2127.5	12-Apr-97	516.3
22-Jul-01	771.7	741.6	30.1	4.06	25-Nov-05	1851.6	17-Dec-96	1351.1
21-Jul-01	682.4	627.2	55.2	8.80	20-Nov-05	1355.0	6-Jan-96	971.2
5-Jun-01	619.6	511.6	108.0	21.11	11-Jan-05	1270.5	30-Apr-95	1219.0
30-Jul-00	618.0	591.1	26.9	4.55	30-Dec-04	1302.2	5-Nov-94	2049.4
14-Jul-00	517.4	503.2	14.2	2.82	22-May-03	799.5	12-May-94	1433.9
25-Dec-98	1042.6	1036.6	6.0	0.58	21-Jan-03	3009.0	1-Jun-93	1394.0
21-Apr-98	508.1	508.1	0.0	0.00	12-Nov-02	2624.1	12-Jan-93	1353.3
13-Jan-98	767.5	767.5	0.0	0.00	1-Jan-02	2029.7	24-Dec-92	1351.2
4-Apr-97	1236.3	1236.3	0.0	0.00	24-Dec-01	1511.0	1-Dec-92	1043.5
4-Jan-97	1025.1	860.5	164.6	19.13	26-Nov-00	2463.7	30-Nov-92	1196.1
15-Jul-95	382.1	382.1	0.0	0.00	18-Dec-98	1030.8	10-Oct-92	1081.2
<i>totals</i>	11545.0	11070.5	474.5	4.29				

* The free 3TP record has, at times, been combined with O&R, triangle dist, and free O&R claims.

D. Free O&R distance claims

<i>date</i>	<i>free O&R</i>	<i>O&R</i>	<i>dist diff</i>	<i>% diff</i>	<i>uncoupled free O&R flts</i>			
18-May-09	632.3	622.4	9.9	1.59				
11-Dec-03	1545.2	1501.5	43.7	2.91				
2-Dec-03	2247.6	2245.6	2.0	0.09	6-Jan-06	1559.6	28-Dec-96	685.6
23-Nov-03	2069.9	2025.2	44.7	2.21	28-Nov-05	1220.6	25-Dec-96	826.5
5-Jun-01	511.6	501.0	10.6	2.12	30-Dec-04	1193.2	24-Dec-96	680.0
26-Aug-01	205.9	204.5	1.4	0.68	2-Dec-03	1294.2	10-Aug-96	884.7
15-Aug-00	262.9	260.8	2.1	0.81	23-Nov-03	2069.9	9-Aug-96	508.0
14-Jul-00	517.4	508.0	9.4	1.85	14-Nov-03	2008.4	22-Jul-96	1003.0
29-Jun-00	205.4	200.0	5.4	2.70	24-May-03	312.2	24-Apr-96	999.8
25-Dec-98	1042.6	1042.6	0.0	0.00	16-Nov-02	1709.0	5-Jan-96	800.0
16-May-98	580.3	580.3	0.0	0.00	26-Jun-02	610.3	1-Jan-96	758.0
21-Apr-98	508.1	508.1	0.0	0.00	21-Nov-00	1550.2	29-Dec-95	685.6
13-Jan-98	767.5	767.5	0.0	0.00	29-Dec-99	1412.2	28-Dec-95	718.8
18-Feb-97	757.2	757.2	0.0	0.00	16-Dec-98	813.6	15-Dec-95	809.5
15-Feb-97	705.0	705.0	0.0	0.00	11-Dec-98	1002.8	30-Oct-95	739.3
4-Jan-97	860.5	860.5	0.0	0.00	10-Dec-98	783.8	20-Oct-95	841.2
24-Jun-96	622.0	622.0	0.0	0.00	8-Jul-98	1304.0	16-Oct-95	546.5
					16-Jul-97	887.3	15-Oct-95	519.0
<i>totals</i>	14041.4	13912.2	129.2	0.93	16-Feb-97	892.2		

Notes to data

- Overall, 133 free records of all four types are listed (as of 15 Feb 11).
- 46% (61) have been claimed in conjunction with a declared task.
- Of the 49 free closed course flights, perhaps on only 2 were the declared TPs "out of sight" of the pilot.

A. Free triangle claims (20 claims)

- 85% (17) were claimed in conjunction with a Triangle Distance declaration.
- Only the 3 Dec 05 flight significantly extended (by 103 km) the declared distance.

B. Free (straight) distance claims (20 claims)

- 60% (12) were claimed in conjunction with a Distance to Goal task.
- 7 flights claimed the declared goal as the free finish point.
- Only 3 flights extended significantly past the declared goal (>10%).

C. Free distance using up to 3 TPs claims (43 claims)

- 52% (28) claimed in conjunction with declared tasks.
- Many seem to be extracted from essentially O&R courses with one or two TPs selected from the vagaries of the track flown. Some flights were declared O&Rs to which both a Free O&R and a Free 3TP was added.

D. Free O&R distance (50 claims)

- 34% of these claims (17) have been appended to an O&R Distance declaration.
- This has been the most active record type.
- Only two flights had the free turn point extend more than 20 km beyond the declared TP, 15 claimed the declared TP or a point a kilometre or less beyond.