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**The American Kitefliers Association**

# INTERNATIONAL SPORT KITE COMPETITION RULES

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The International Rule Book Committee (IRBC) was conceived in 1996 to produce a user-friendly rule book that could be used by fliers at competitions all over the world.

This book contains only the definitions, rules, and guidelines. It is meant to make the sport more appealing to fliers and spectators. It therefore does not go into detail about judging or compulsory figures. The companion “Judges’ Book” provides more of this detail, and the forthcoming “Compulsory Book” will complete this first phase of the project.

The IRBC would like to thank all those, now too numerous to mention, who have helped develop the sport kite rules over the years. We would particularly like to thank those who have assisted and supported us in producing this rule book. We are grateful to you, the fliers, judges, organizers, and other officials for your patience in waiting for this and we hope that you feel, as we do, that this rule book will take sport kite flying into the new millennium.

The International Rule Book Committee April 2002

| AJSKA | AKA | STACK |
|---|---|---|
| Fumiaki Tatsuma | David Hansen | Helmut Georgi |
| Kouichi Shimada | Mike Gillard | Peter Fiedler |

# II. DEFINITIONS

## A. Sanctioning Authority

A sanctioning authority shall be any of the following organisations: All-Japan Sport Kite Association (AJSKA), American Kitefliers Association (AKA), and Sport Team and Competitive Kiting (STACK). Other organizations may be recognized as sanctioning authorities by a unanimous vote of the sanctioning authorities. Individual sanctioning authorities may issue appendices that further explain and modify portions of this document, and any other documents issued by the International Rule Book Committee. It is the responsibility of the sanctioning authority to use due diligence to make the rule books and appropriate appendices available to all competitors and staff. It is the competitor's responsibility to understand all such documents. The latest updates will be available at the official IRBC website, http://www.kitelife.com/irbc.

## B. International Rule Book Committee (IRBC)

The International Rule Book Committee (IRBC) shall consist of two members from each of the sanctioning authorities. At international competitions sanctioned by more than one of the sanctioning authorities, the IRBC acts as the sanctioning authority for purposes of rules interpretations and reporting.

## C. Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee shall consist of the event organizer, a judges' representative (not the chief judge), and a competitors' representative. The judges' representative will be chosen by the judging staff. The competitors' representative will be chosen by the competitors at the competition briefing. The committee members may solicit advice from others as needed.

## D. Skill Levels

Skill levels shall be defined by each sanctioning authority but shall include, at a minimum, novice and masters levels. The method of determining a competitor's skill level shall be defined by each sanctioning authority.

## E. Discipline

A discipline is an individual part of the competition—for example, Masters Dual-Line Team Ballet or Experienced Multi-Line Individual Precision.

## F. Class

A class is one, two, or more specified disciplines at the same skill level; the same competitor must complete all the disciplines. For example, Masters Individual Dual-Line Ballet plus Masters Individual Dual-Line Precision combine to form the Masters Individual Dual-Line Class.

## G. Competition

A competition consists of a number of disciplines all carried out at one location over one or more consecutive days.

### H. Team

A team consists of at least three people.

### I. Pair

A pair consists of two people.

### J. Individual

An individual is one person.

### K. Competitor

A competitor is a team, pair, or individual, depending on the discipline.

### L. Dual-Line Kite

A dual-line kite has two independent control lines.

### M. Multi-Line Kite

A multi-line kite has more than two independent control lines.

### N. Train

A train consists of three or more kites flown as one.

### O. Tails

Tails are optional and are not considered part of the kite.

# III. RULES

These rules cannot be changed by competition officials under any circumstances.

## A. Required Penalties

A competitor who breaks any rule or guideline will be penalized. Where a specific penalty is not mentioned in the rule or guideline, the chief judge may penalize or disqualify that competitor from the discipline, class, or competition depending on the seriousness of the action.

## B. Safety

At all times, safety shall be paramount. A competitor will be penalized for unsafe flying by being disqualified from a discipline at the discretion of the head judge or the entire competition at the discretion of the chief judge.

### 1. Boundaries

An outer boundary is required and an inner boundary is strongly recommended. The inner, yellow flag, boundary is used by line judges and field directors as a reference for cautioning competitors that they or their kites are nearing the outer, red flag, boundary.

The outer boundary is defined by an imaginary line that runs through the poles, posts, or other supports that are used to hold the boundary marking material (rope, cord, tape, etc.), not by the marking material itself.

### 2. Flying over Boundaries

Flying over the outer boundary will result in disqualification from the discipline in which a competitor is competing, is about to compete, or has recently competed. This rule applies from the first call for a discipline through the end of that discipline, as determined by the head judge.

### 3. Moving over Boundaries

If, while competing, any part of a competitor's body moves outside the outer boundary, the competitor will be disqualified.

## C. Sportsmanship

Competitors shall act in a sportsmanlike way at all times.

## D. Official Staff

Any official may delegate part of his or her duties (excluding judging) to another person.

### 1. Chief Judge

There must be one chief judge of the competition. The chief judge assigns the head judge and other judges for each discipline. The chief judge may also serve as a head judge but cannot be a competitor at the competition.

### 2. Judging Panels

There must be a minimum of three judges for any discipline. Five judge panels are strongly preferred.

### 3. Field Director

There must be one field director for every discipline.

### 4. Pit Boss

A pit boss will be provided as needed, depending on the discipline size and skill level.

### 5. Line Judges

There should be a minimum of two line judges for any discipline.

### 6. Scorers

Are required to tabulate the scores from the judging panels and post the results under the direction of the chief judge.

## E. Advice While Competing

While on the competition field, competitors may not receive advice from anyone other than the field director.

## F. Protest

### 1. Unfair Treatment

Any competitor who feels unfairly treated may protest to the head judge of the discipline within an appropriate amount of time. If the competitor is not satisfied with the head judge's response, the protest may be referred to the chief judge. If the chief judge cannot resolve the protest, the competitor may protest, in writing, to the supervisory committee. If the protest is still not resolved to the competitor's satisfaction, the competitor may refer the original written protest and the supervisory committee's written response to the appropriate sanctioning authority.

At international competitions sanctioned by more than one of the sanctioning authorities, the International Rule Book Committee is the final appeal.

### 2. Abuse of Official Position

Any competitor or official who feels that an official has abused his or her position or behaved in an unsportsmanlike manner may complain to a member of the supervisory committee or, in writing, to the appropriate sanctioning authority. The supervisory committee may uphold the complaint and give the official a warning. In this case, the supervisory committee shall then send a written report to the sanctioning authority. The sanctioning authority may take appropriate action against the official. Such action might include banning the official from being an official for a prescribed time.

At international competitions sanctioned by more than one of the sanctioning authorities, the International Rule Book Committee (IRBC) replaces the sanctioning authority in the above process.

## G. Membership of Pairs and Teams

### 1. Registration

Membership of pairs and teams must be registered with the appropriate sanctioning authority. The method of registration shall be determined by the sanctioning authority.

### 2. Composition

Team composition may be different within a competition (e.g., between ballet and precision) and between competitions. Pairs composition may not be different within a competition but may change between competitions.

The following table indicates how many of the registered members may change for a particular competition and the minimum number of members that must participate in any discipline:

| Number of Registered Members | Maximum Number of Members That Can Change | Minimum Number of Members |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 | 2 | 4 |
| 6 | 3 | 5 |
| 7 | 3 | 6 |
| 8 or more | 4 | 6 |

# IV. GUIDELINES

These guidelines cannot be changed by competition officials unless competitors are notified of any changes at least 30 days in advance of the first day of the competition.

## A. Briefings

### 1. Competition Briefing

At the start of a competition all competitors, judges, and officials come together for a briefing run by the chief judge. At a minimum, the chief judge shall cover any specific rules and guidelines, go through the running order for the competition, and answer any general questions concerning the competition. There should be sufficient time allotted for the competitors to choose a competitors' representative. At the chief judge's discretion, introductory briefings may be held at the start of each day.

### 2. Discipline Briefing

Before each discipline starts, the head judge shall hold a briefing specific to that discipline. At a minimum, the head judge shall introduce the judges, field director, pit boss, and line judges for that discipline, explain the arrangements for staging in and staging out, announce the precision compulsory figures, ensure that the field director has collected music for ballet, and answer any specific questions for the discipline.

## B. Debriefings

### 1. Competition Debriefing

At the end of a competition, all competitors, judges, and officials shall come together for a debriefing run by the chief judge. The purpose of the debriefing is to stimulate discussion among the various parties and thus enable recommendations to be made to improve future competitions.

### 2. Discipline Debriefing

If requested by either the judges or any of the competitors, a discipline debriefing run by the head judge will be held.

## C. Flight Order Draw

Either the draw for the flight order of each discipline may be done randomly in advance and clearly posted, or it may be done at the discipline briefing. If there is a conflict over timing, the flight order may be adjusted by the chief judge.

## D. Competition Field

The outer (red flag) boundary shall be at least the size set out below but preferably larger.

| | Meters | Feet |
|---|---|---|
| **Team and Pairs** | 110 x 110 | 360 x 360 |
| **Individual Dual-Line** | 90 x 90 | 295 x 295 |
| **Individual Multi-Line** | 75 x 75 | 246 x 246 |

An inner (yellow flag) boundary, at least 3 meters (10 feet) from the outer boundary, should be marked where possible. The sizes expressed in meters take precedence.

## E. Staging In and Out

Adjacent to each flying field, there shall be two separate areas for staging in and out. It is solely the competitor's responsibility to be in the stage-in area and awaiting the signal to move onto the field.

## F. Calling In and Out

### 1. Precision

A competitor must announce the start of each compulsory by saying IN and the end by saying OUT. In addition, the competitor must announce the beginning of a technical routine with IN and the end with OUT.

### 2. Ballet

Competitors may call IN and OUT for the beginning and end of their routine. However, if no calls are made, the judges will consider the competitor IN with the beginning of the music and OUT with the end.

## G. Setup Times

A competitor may not enter the competition field until the field director signals permission. The setup times for the discipline begin with that signal.

| | Individuals | Pairs | Teams |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Setup for discipline** | 3 minutes | 4 minutes | 5 minutes |
| **Between compulsories** | 45 seconds | 45 seconds | 45 seconds |
| **Between compulsories and technical** | 90 seconds | 90 seconds | 90 seconds |

Competitors may not start any part of their performance without the field director's signal. If the prescribed setup time has expired and the field director has not yet signaled permission to start, the competitor must start within 45 seconds after receiving the field director's signal. At no time will a competitor have less than 15 seconds to start after receiving permission from the field director. If the field director has signaled permission to start and the competitor fails to start within the prescribed time, the field director will announce IN for the competitor and the judges will score accordingly.

## H. Ballet

The ballet discipline is characterized by the interpretation of music. Therefore a performance that is in major parts or entirely without music will not be considered to be ballet.

### 1. Minimum and Maximum Times

| | Individuals | Pairs | Teams |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Minimum** | 2 minutes | 2 minutes | 2 minutes |
| **Maximum** | 4 minutes | 5 minutes | 5 minutes |

### 2. Music

Tapes or CDs shall be turned in during the discipline briefing. Music shall be cued and clearly labeled. Competitors can turn in up to 3 pieces of music but must tell the field director which piece to use upon entering the field. Live music may be accepted if approved by the organizer and chief judge.

It is acceptable to have a signal prior to the beginning of the music. The music may be composed for the performance, an arrangement, or an existing piece. However, the music must be an entity and shall not consist of completely separate pieces just attached to one another. If different pieces of music are used, they must be combined to give the impression of one entity. The music should end naturally, not abruptly as if edited to meet time constraints.

### 3. Choreography

Choreography is the interpretation of selected music, a performance from beginning to end. There shall be a close relation between the music and the performance. The routine shall interpret the variations of the musical composition, such as dynamic, tempo, rhythm, originality (not necessarily meant to be spectacular), mood, creativity, variety, etc.

### 4. Execution

Execution is a measurement of the flying ability of the competitor and is judged with reference to the competitor's accuracy, control, timing, spacing, and use of the wind window, as well as the complexity, daring, and technical difficulty of the routine.

## I. Precision

A precision discipline tests the technical skills of the competitor; it consists of compulsories and a technical routine in that order.

### 1. Compulsory Figures

Three compulsory figures testing different skills of the competitors are chosen on the day of the discipline by the chief judge from a maximum selection of six that must have been disclosed to the competitors at least 30 days in advance. The competitor may fly any of the figures using a left-to-right orientation opposite from

what is described. The competitor must notify the field director of this intent before the field director gives the competitor permission to begin that figure. Failure to so do will result in a zero score for that figure.

**2. Technical Routine**

A technical routine is a full, flowing routine that demonstrates evidence of a plan and the technical skill of the competitor. For judging and scoring purposes, it is separated into execution and content components.

**a) Execution**

The execution component consists of, but is not limited to, considerations of accuracy, control, timing, spacing, use of the wind window, complexity, and inclusion of technically demanding and daring maneuvers.

**b) Content**

The content component consists of, but is not limited to, considerations of tempo, rhythm, originality (not necessarily meant to be spectacular), creativity, and variety.

**c) Minimum and Maximum Times**

| | Individuals | Pairs | Teams |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Minimum** | 1 minutes | 2 minutes | 2 minutes |
| **Maximum** | 3 minutes | 5 minutes | 5 minutes |

## J. Wind Guidelines

**1. Wind Speed Ranges**

Competitors are expected to fly when the wind is within the following ranges:

| | Minimum | | Maximum | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | kph | mph | kph | mph |
| **Novice** | 7.0 | 4.4 | 30.0 | 18.6 |
| **Masters** | 4.0 | 2.5 | 45.0 | 28.0 |

Speeds have been approximately converted from kph to mph; the figure in kph takes precedence. Regulations for other skill levels may be defined by the relevant sanctioning authority.

**2. Wind Checks**

**a) Before Calling IN**

At any time before calling IN, a competitor may request a wind check. Competitors must still comply with other rules and guidelines while the wind check is taking place. The field director will measure the wind for a period of 10 seconds. If the wind speed is not within the prescribed range throughout,

the competitor does not need to call IN, and a wind recess will be announced by the field director.

**b) Up to 2 Minutes into Technical or Ballet Routine**

Up to 2 minutes into the technical or ballet routine (1 minute for individual precision), a competitor may request a wind check, although they must continue flying while the wind check is taking place. The field director will measure the wind for a period of 10 seconds. If the wind is not within the prescribed range, the competitor may stop flying and a wind recess will be announced by the field director.

**3. Wind Recess**

Once a wind recess has been announced, the head judge determines when and how the performance or discipline will resume, if it can. The chief judge will decide to postpone or cancel the discipline if it cannot resumed within a reasonable amount of time. If a postponed discipline cannot be resumed on the same day within a few hours, all competitors must refly when the discipline is resumed.

Competitors may be asked to remain on the field or told to await an announcement. If and when the performance or discipline is resumed, competitors will be allowed setup time in accordance with the appropriate setup time rule for that discipline.

**4. Extreme Weather**

When the chief judge thinks that the weather may lead to dangerous or unfair competition in a particular discipline (e.g., when there is low or high wind conditions, heavy rain, lightning), the chief judge may take appropriate action. The action may include, but is not limited to, announcing a wind recess, amending the wind speed regulation, canceling the discipline or competition, enlarging the field, reducing the compulsories, or eliminating the technical routine.

Where appropriate the chief judge should call for a special briefing to explain the circumstances to competitors, officials, and organizers to ensure that everyone is clear as to the revised rules and guidelines.

## K. 45-Second Guideline

If a kite crashes and is unable to be relaunched within 45 seconds, the performance will be deemed to have finished. For the purpose of this guideline, if a kite of one member of a team or pair crashes and while on the ground additional kite or kites crash, all kites must be relaunched within 45 seconds from the time the first kite crashed.

If the kite(s) are not relaunched within 45 seconds and the original crash took place before minimum time, then the competitor shall score zero. If the original crash took place after minimum time, then there will be a penalty.

## L. Heats

If there are more than 15 competitors in a discipline, it may be necessary to have heats. The number of heats shall be such that no individual heat has more than 15

competitors and that, as much as possible, there are the same number of competitors in each heat. The chief judge and organizer shall determine how many competitors from each heat will qualify for the final, **providing that there are no more than 15 competitors in the final**, and announce this (if relevant) at the introductory briefing.

## M. Equipment

Competitors may fly any safe dual- or multi-line kites relevant to the discipline. They may change their kites between parts of a discipline or a wind recess, provided that they comply with the regulations as to setup times. They may mend their kites with parts that were brought inside the boundary prior to the start of the performance. The 45-second regulation still applies. A broken line must be replaced, not tied.

## N. Headsets

Teams and pairs may use headsets to communicate among themselves, provided that they do not interfere with the communication systems used by the officials, organizers, or local authorities and that they comply with relevant local laws.

## O. Disqualification

Any competitor who is disqualified shall leave the field as soon as possible. Any protest or discussion shall take place after the discipline has finished.

## P. Launch Crews

Launch crews are people brought inside the boundary by the competitor to assist with kite placement, crash recovery, equipment repair, and the like. Individuals and pairs may have at most two assistants. Teams may have one assistant for each team member. The launch crew may have and use replacement kites, kite parts, and flying line sets brought inside the boundary before the beginning of the competitor's performance. Nothing may be brought inside the boundary after the competitor's performance has begun.

If a competitor requires and cannot supply a launch crew, one will be chosen for the competitor during the discipline briefing from the ranks of the other competitors in the discipline. Where possible, other competitors will be assigned when they do not immediately precede or follow the competitor in need of launch crew. Changes to this method of choosing the launch crew, if required, will be described at the introductory briefing.