



Update on the General Rules for 2023 and CIVA Sporting Code Section 6

One of the apparently least rewarding challenges of aerobatic contests is the studying to achieve a good understanding of the rules. Understand them though you must, since the sport is very much rule-based! Our **2023 General Rules update** has just been published in [Rules and Documents](#), slightly later than usual as the international version on which these are based was also delayed. *Please make sure you are familiar with these rules as the Contest Director and Chief Judge are entitled to expect you to abide by them!*

Here is a summary of the key changes this year:

Pilot eligibility and proficiency

There is some confusion among pilots about the Part-FCL aerobatic rating. If you have an FCL licence and want to fly solo in a contest, you **must** have an aerobatic rating added to your licence by the CAA, regardless of the type you are flying. If you don't then you may only be able to fly at Club/Sports with a suitably qualified instructor, who must be in current proficiency and a member of British Aerobatics. **You must get this approved by no later than the closing date for the contest.**

To compete at all you must also have passed a **proficiency sign-off** with a **Flight Evaluator** at all levels including **Club**. This is very important to note. The only exceptions are our **Get into Aeros** event and the special **Club** event at **Little Gransden** on 13th May. You will no longer receive a proficiency card, and the details will now be held in our digital records. See [Pilot proficiency](#) for contact details of our **Flight Evaluators**.

If you have an EASA, FAA or third country licence, you will need to validate this with the UK CAA before the event. Start at the [CAA website](#) for the relevant information.

See 1.8 Qualification of Pilots and Appendix X 23.0 Pilot Proficiency System for eligibility and proficiency rules.

Safety Heights

Following discussion in our Safety Working Group we have restated the Club, Sports and Intermediate **safety and qualification** heights in feet:

3.7.1 The height limitations, above aerodrome level, for each class are as follows:

Class	Upper	Lower	Exclusion
Club/Club+	None	1500 ft	1300 ft
Sports	None	1000 ft	800 ft
Intermediate	None	1000 ft	800 ft

While this might appear to be obvious, the previous table was in metres. With most altimeters calibrated in feet, it is this measure we want pilots to focus on. As ever, it is a simple majority view within the judging panel which will decide if you will get a penalty or be excluded, so make sure you leave plenty of margin for error!

See 3.7 Height Limitations

Judging changes

The rules around the judges' award of a zero mark have changed for 2023 and the **Perception Zero** has been removed from the rule book. In its place are a mixture of **Hard Zeros** and **downgrades**, depending on the figure concerned. *The judge should give a clear comment about why the zero has been awarded and you should check this when you receive your completed judging sheets. If it isn't clear, raise it with the Scorer or Contest Director in the first instance.*

The following downgrades will be applied where a PZ would have previously been given:

1	A flick-roll never started proper autorotation	HZ
2	A spin never started proper autorotation	HZ
3	A rolling turn included a flick roll	HZ
4	A tail-slide does not move backwards by the required amount	-4.0 points
5	More than 45deg of roll is flown on the exit line of a rolling turn	-4.0 points
6	Glider stalling during a loop	HZ
7	Glider being too far in the back of the box	-2.0 points

See 4.7 Marks of Zero to understand how Zeros are handled

Power Unknown Figures (Unlimited)

There is a permitted increase in the number of flick-rolls per figure to two, in up to two figures in Programmes 2,3 and 4.

See CIVA SC6-1 2.3 Programmes 2, 3 & 4 - The Free Unknown Programmes for details of allowable figures

Gliders

The Unlimited disqualification height has increased to **150m** (500 feet approx.)

See SC6-2 3.9 Height Limitations and 4.4.1 Infringements of Height Limits

Flick rolls on 45 degrees down lines after looping segments have been removed from the eligible figures for Unknowns.

See SC6-2 A. APPENDIX A: LIST OF FIGURES FOR PROGRAMMES 2 THROUGH 6

Power Club+ Class

You will now see references to a new Class, **Club+**. This is being trialled in 2023 and will involve a sequence of up to 8 figures and will exclude spins. This is to allow lower powered aircraft and those not cleared for spinning to participate in competition aerobatics. The plan is to progress in 2024 to a series of events with a points accumulation to decide the champion. Get in touch with **our Head of Contests, Brian McCartney** if you would like to get involved contests@aerobatics.org.uk.

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