

## Role of the Contest Director: Slate of Events

### ***Three Approaches, 'Off the Shelf', 'the Consistent Modeler', and 'Take No Prisoners!'***

#### **General Considerations**

The [location](#), date and time of the contest all impact your selection of events. See the topics dealing with these issues for details.

The events should be suited to your flying area. Can the altitude and duration events be safely launched from and recovered in your area? It is not necessarily 'Can a minimum diameter, optimum weight G Streamer Duration model be recovered?' but rather 'Can the contestants reasonably design and build a model that can be safely launched from and recovered in our field?' that should be your question.

You should pick a date that your experience and research show to have reasonable expectations of flyable weather conditions. Again, the Big Time Competitor (BTC), 'Take No Prisoners!' contestant should not be your main consideration. Rather, you should ascertain whether the cloud ceiling is likely to unreasonably hinder your contestants. Wind over 20mph, too much rain, soggy field, etc, can certainly require a rescheduling. Try to avoid these conditions.

Your support equipment and personnel is also a consideration. Can your launch equipment support 20 people flying 2 flights in 6 events each over 2 days? That's 120 flights a day. Do you have theodolites to track altitude events? Do you have trained trackers? Communication? Measured baseline?? Oh, yes...stopwatches?

#### **Target Audience**

One of your main considerations in selecting events is the need to attract contestants. A regional event must have at least 10 contestants. There are limits to the number of contestants who can earn points for a single section in the Open and Regional contests. All contests except the Section meet have geographic requirements. The events in your contest should be attractive to your target audience. This audience consists of several groups.

Beginners are one group you want to attract. Without a constant influx of beginners, our hobby will wither. New competitors come in many flavors:

- Experienced rocketeer who has little or no competition experience.
- Young experienced rocketeer who has little or no competition experience.
- Old experienced rocketeer who has little or no competition experience.
- New racketeer with little or no competition experience.
- Young new racketeer with little or no competition experience.
- Old new racketeer with little or no competition experience.
- Championship craftsman with little or no competition experience.
- Craftsmanship challenged with little or no competition experience.

The one thing your 'beginners' will have in common is that they have little or no competition experience.

## TCC Hosting NAR Competition: Role of the Contest Director in Selecting Events

On the other end of the spectrum is the Big Time Competitor (BTC). The true BTC is obsessed with wringing the most performance out of each contest entry. Don't be put off by their whining that your field is too small for your events. BTCs don't mind losing models. However, several NAR competition events, such as Egg Lofting, require that the flier return the model. BTCs will throw a hissy fit if they think your field is 'too small' and demand that you modify your contest to fit their whims.

The Serious (but not obsessed) competitor competes mostly for the sheer joy of meeting the challenge. They will usually participate in any meet they can attend. They tend to prefer Regionals, but are not obsessed with maximizing points.

Your contest, to be successful, should have something for everyone. Not that every contest must satisfy everyone, but that over the contest year most folks get what they want:

- Competitors in A Division (7-13years) and new competitors typically have fewer modeling skills than more experienced folks. You can encourage them by picking events that can be flown (not necessarily won) by models purchased from local outlets...off the shelf.
- Saturday morning sport fliers could be tempted to compete if they already have rockets that fit your events. These folks can be considered Casual Competitors.
- Serious Competitors will fly almost anything if they can afford to travel to your contest. Eventually, your beginners will move into this category.
- The BTC crowd is in hot pursuit of their 12 contest factors. To maximize points, they have to compete in 4 Regional meets in a year. Serious (but less rabid) competitors will compete in Section, Local and Open meets as well.

### Off The Shelf

Hobby Lobby, Michael's, Hobby Town, etc. stock Estes, Quest, and Custom kits. Some more than others. Many of these kits can fly, and even be competitive, in many events. The 1/8A events are the exception. The only off the shelf 1/8A rockets are 'Ready To Fly' (RTF). They cannot be flown in competition. Otherwise, just about any light-weight rocket will do well in Parachute or Streamer Duration. Quest and Custom offer competitive Egg Lofting kits. Almost anything works in Open Spot Landing. Several kits can be used in Sport Scale or serve as the basis for a truly competitive Sport Scale entry. There are also several kits that can be legally flown in the Boost Glider category. The average sport flier can fit in well here. Someone with a wide range of models already built will probably have something that could be flown in most events. These kits will typically use 1/4A through E black powder motors.

There are many online vendors, some of whom offer truly competitive kits. Such as

Qualified Competition Rockets <http://cybertravelog.com/qcr/index.html>

Aerospace Specialty Products <http://www.asp-rocketry.com/index.cfm>

Venus Model Rocketry <http://www.venusrocketry.com/index.html>

### Consistent Modeler

The Consistent Modeler could be one of your sport fliers or a Serious Competitor. These folks enjoy flying for the sake of flying yet like to compare their abilities to those of other rocketeers.

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They can be attracted to more challenging events as they enjoy building something new. Dual Egg Lofting, Rocket Glider, Helicopter, Sport Scale, and SuperRoc in all impulse ranges are all attractive to these folks. They are as interested in having fun designing, building and flying as they are in competing and winning. Their competition strategy is to consistently place rather than win every event. Many of these folks will qualify as BTCs. They'll fly a mix of black powder and APCP motors.

### **BTCs and Take No Prisoners!**

The competitors usually build minimum diameter, maximum performance models than push the envelop of the available technology. These folks insist on flying in 4 regional meets in a year. They have to in order to get maximum points. You will seldom see them flying at Section, Local or Open contests. They tend to concentrate on events in the next national meet. Thus they are NARAM-centric. Along with maximizing points, they want test their NARAM models in competition.

### **Conclusion**

A good contest will have events that:

- can be flown with kits bought off the shelf or already built
- require good craftsmanship, design and scratch-building skills
- will be flown at NARAM

A good contest will most certainly have events that, for whatever reason, appeal to your target audiences. Generally speaking, you should have one or two events from each of these three categories in your contest.

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