Tips for Judges (revised May 2019)

I would like to offer a “Judges Checklist” to help judges prepare to do a judging session. If you have items to add, please let me know.

Judges Checklist

* Be prepared with knowledge. Read and perhaps re-read the current competition guidelines. These are found on the NWSAM website. Each year they are refined and minor changes are introduced. Be as familiar as you can be with these guidelines.
  + Changes for 2019 include adding diagrams for flight maneuvers along with verbal descriptions. Familiarize yourself with how the maneuvers should look.
* Attend a refresher judging session if one is available.
* Be prepared for judging with equipment: a clipboard and pen/pencil, headgear for hot days, sunglasses, comfortable clothing, a folding chair and maybe a small umbrella or sunshade attached (sometimes these are provided, but be sure you have one), drinking water (again, many times this is provided by the event, but ensure you have some).
* Be sure to have your neckband certification/nametag, and wear it. This will indicate to the contestants and others that you are indeed a “Certified Judge” and will help all to get to know you.
* When judging, be sure you clearly understand the maneuvers the contestant will be performing…ask questions.
* Use the judging symbols on the score sheet to help the contestant understand the score you have assessed. In most instances, the contestant will know if he did a maneuver badly, but where the variance is minor, the symbols help. E.g. if a Fly Past is marginally too high or too low, the contestant needs to know this, because he probably feels he was OK for altitude. 
* Always be positive and encouraging, especially with new competitors. Constructive criticism is usually welcome but often it is how it is presented. Be very diplomatic on how you offer your critique.
* Always strive to be fair and consistent, and most of all, enjoy the experience.

Cheers,

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