

# Northern Challenge Series



2024



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(Updated December 2023)

## 1. AIM:

- a) To provide a set of season-long challenges (tasks) with both a **Competitive** and **Pilot Development** element.
- b) To provide a flexible approach in terms of pilot availability and level, weather and task types.
- c) To bring an increased focus, skill set (navigation) and enjoyment to a day's flying.

## 2. Eligibility.

Any full flying member of the BHPA can enter the NCS main and/or Hike n Fly series.

There is no entry fee.

*Note: Most tasks (MAIN) can be attempted by CP and above rated pilots. HIKE & FLY tasks require a higher skill and experience level that may require some extra guidance and support.*

## 3. The challenges (tasks) will run between 1<sup>st</sup> February and 31<sup>st</sup> October incl. (subject to change)

- a) There will be 14 tasks in the (main) series.
- b) There will be 6 (subsidiary) hike and fly tasks.

The **Main** and the **Hike and Fly** series will be awarded and scored separately.

## 4a. Tasks (main):

 These are ideal as pilot development as well as a scored competition.

- a) All tasks are site based, but a few have slight extensions to push the site envelope.
- b) They are spread geographically/wind window- wise across the club regions as far as is practical
- c) Be as inclusive as possible in terms of glider and/or pilot experience level/rating.
- d) They are standing tasks between the dates above and can have multiple attempts between the set dates including on the same day. BUT ... you should aim to upload only your best attempt or a max of three per task across the full time period. Only your best attempt/points will appear and count towards the final total. Please resist the temptation to overload the system – you may break it!
- e) Only up to the best 8 (Main) task results will score. This allows for dropping of up to six tasks - it could be choosing not to fly a task, dropping worst scores or a 'members only' restriction. If your final total is (say) made up of ten flights the lowest two will be deducted for your final score.
- f) All tasks will have roughly equal weighting in terms of scoring, based around task completion and time factors. This is regardless of whether some are slightly longer or shorter after optimisation. Do not regard optimised length as a measure of difficulty – some shorter ones have harder sections.

g) The flying window is to be between 0800hr and 2000hr (or lighting up time) for the main 14 tasks. The late close is to allow for evening/after-work attempts. For the Hike and Fly tasks the window will be between 0700 hrs and 21.00 hrs (or lighting up/sunrise time) whichever is the earlier. It also includes additional safety rules which can be found in the Task Guidance Notes relating to H&F.

**h) CLUB SITE RULES over-ride every other consideration. For example, Stags Fell/ Model Ridge are 'members only' therefore you must be a Club member to attempt those tasks. Any breach of site rules will DSQ you from ALL NCT tasks and your flights will be removed.**

i) An illustrative set of task diagrams is available as one of the downloads.

**4b. Tasks (subsidiary):** These will be longer and of a **Hike and Fly** nature.

- a) There will be six tasks. The **best four scores** to count towards the final total. Multiple attempts allowed, but only best to score
- b) For 2024 they are designed to be shorter 'day tasks'. The aim is to make them less daunting and available to a wider range of pilots in terms of their experience, fitness levels and equipment. They are based around known sites, flown ridges that can be interconnected and selecting a suitable day will ease the amount of walking.

*The actual distance, if terrain is taken into consideration may be further than the distances above indicates.*

4c) Separate rules pertaining to the H&F tasks (see Guidance Notes below)

**The X Dales** is run quite separately with its own set of Rules and Aims.

**Some rules/notes specifically relating to the Hike n Fly Challenges of the NCS**

- a) You must nominate someone who will monitor you. This could be using tracking, regular mobile calls, spot/delorme/reach etc. You must keep someone informed of your progress, position, condition and intentions. **DO NOT just set out alone with no one keeping tabs on you. ALSO you must send an sms to 07808394895 to inform me you are attempting a task BEFORE setting off.** Name, task and wing details/colours are useful information to add.
- b) You may have a ground support, but they cannot transport you or your equipment including providing any change of wing, harness reserve or helmet that you began with. They can provide drink, food, spare batteries, spare phone, condition/weather advice, tent/sleeping bag (if over-nighting), fresh clothes, wet weather gear, footwear. If in doubt check first.
- c) Ideally you will have one continuous tracklog (there are plenty of devices that will do that and allow for speed changes (flying/walking) and resting periods. If you haven't got one then ask around and borrow). Separate/broken igc files are fine if they can be stitched together and show especially that cylinders were tagged and a start and finish time/location is recorded.
- d) Depending on the time of year **you cannot fly on any day after lighting up time (sunset) and before sunrise.** These tables are readily available on line for all localities in the UK. Obviously, the high summer months provide the most hours you can utilise.
- e) You may consider it safer, more sociable and efficient to attempt the task with one or two others.
- f) You are responsible for carrying out your own risk assessment (RA) which may involve others for advice.

- g) ALL equipment must conform to EN standards (reserve, helmet and glider and may be subject to checks).
- h) You must carry a mobile phone, 2m radio (set to local club frequency) and spare battery power.
- i) A waypoint can only be tagged ONCE unless otherwise shown in the task details.
- j) Tandem entries are allowed, after prior approval.
- k) **ANY breach of the Countryside Code is a DSQ.** Read and understand it.
- l) If you feel your 'plan' may challenge the spirit of H&K please contact me (EC) in advance to have it checked out.

5. **Competition Admin:** The tasks will be hosted on XCMAP. This will provide:

- a) A map of the task showing cylinders (most are 400m radius; a few are different, especially starts and goals), task ID and other relevant detail including order they are to be taken in.
- b) Easy download of the turnpoints as .gpx and .wpt and into various apps (eg xctsk for xctrack, xcsoar, flyskyhy. A .cup set (if you have an Oudie) is available from me, but easy to make using gpsdump.
- c) Easy upload by pilots of their tracklog.
- d) Online scoring showing points gained and current position by task and overall.
- e) A current leaderboard showing for all tasks and pilot scores.
- f) Glider EN rating to be displayed (see awards section).
- g) Entrants need to ensure their recording instrument is set to show their name. This is important for uploading as it will be the name that is read and shows against the submitted tracklog. There is no registration/password required. Any mistake will have to be rectified through our admin. Contact Chris Foster or myself.
- h) Myself (with CF) will administer the whole event, this places no onus on any club to do any work beyond supporting, encouraging and promoting.

6. **Competition Final Placings and trophies/awards:**

- a) The final total (**MAIN**) will be comprised of eight (or up to) task scores giving final placings for the main task set. To be clear – best 8/14 tasks determine final placings.
- b) The Hike 'n Fly tasks (**SUBSIDIARY**) will be ranked and scored separately. The route and all upload/downloads will still be via XCMAP. The total across the best four tasks will determine the final total. To be clear – best 4 tasks determine final placings.
- c) Winners trophies will be awarded for the MAIN, HIKE & FLY. All trophies to be awarded as determined (date and venue) by the winning pilot's clubs or the pilot themselves..
- d) An award will (also) be made for the highest placed pilot flying a glider up to/including EN B rating. With the advent of EN C two liners this award has changed to reflect this.
- e) The trophy sponsor is **Ozone paragliders** – with grateful thanks.

## 7. Other important rules:

- a) All club sites rules take precedence over the tasks. In other words any site closed periods, members only, numbers limits, NO GO areas, airspace etc., **MUST be adhered to. Any flight in breach of these rules will be disqualified!**
- b) Tracklogs should be uploaded as soon as possible, but no later than 14 days after being flown.
- c) ALL pilots must take responsible decisions about weather/flying conditions (see disclaimer). CP rated pilots will be able to attempt most tasks that stay close or near to the home task site. Any that involve an XC element requires them to be 'mentored' by a club coach which means suitably briefed. This can't be easily checked on ... so regard it as sound advice.

## 9. Other:

### Information displays.

- i) The **current year page** displays all tasks (and their links) and the current, in play, league table. It will only accept flight entries within the OPEN window. The awards are drawn from this league table.
- ii) The **task pages results** tab displays all historical attempts/scores since that task was first set up. Its purpose is to provide both a long term record for that task and a reference point for ALL attempts. Previous NCS tasks can still be flown but are found under the relevant club area. This also provides historical attempt data.

**XCMAP LINK** <http://www.xcmap.net>

With thanks to Chris Foster for his help and continuing development of the site.

## 10. Safety disclaimer:

***All pilots fly under their own responsibility. It is each pilot's responsibility to take all necessary actions to maintain their own safety during the tasks, and to ensure that they do not act in any way that might endanger any other pilots. It is a condition of entry to the Northern Challenge Series for all pilots to accept without restriction, to hold the Organisers blameless, and waive all claims to compensation.***

Ed Cleasby (Dec 2023)

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