

Northern Challenge Trophy



2020



Guidance notes on tasks.

These notes are provided as a supplementary to provide some insight into the tasks and why they are designed as they are. They cover the **main 14 tasks** and the **four subsidiary Hike and Fly tasks** for which extra safety rules are included. There are also a few notes on route setting.

Tasks (now confirmed for 2019) can be viewed and downloaded from www.xcmap.net

Main tasks - general factors

- a) Level of Difficulty – the biggest single factor is the conditions under which the task is attempted. This could render a task from easy to impossible. However, given it is flyable then some of the task is always possible – this is especially the case with the five GRID challenges. Whether the full task can be completed is another matter.
- b) The tasks are roughly of equal level in terms of size to difficulty ratio. Based on experience, location and terrain for example a shorter FAI may be equal in difficulty to a larger length task. The scoring takes account of task size and difficulty level.
- c) Roughly speaking tasks are designed to become increasingly difficult as you progress through them. This is very much the case with the GRID's, but it also applies to other tasks where turnpoints are further away or more awkwardly placed. One idea has been the use of expanding FAI triangles; progressing to the outer (larger) triangle when it becomes more challenging. This equally applies to Cat's Cradle tasks where the cylinders get pushed further away.
- d) For safety reasons an end of speed section is used. For those unfamiliar with this, it means an outer, larger cylinder exists beyond the inner goal cylinder to prevent racing in low to the goal. Not all cylinders are 400m – some cylinders are much bigger - CHECK! Your time stops at the outer cylinder (ESS) but you need to achieve goal.
- e) Scoring – you just need to upload your flight and the scoring will be done automatically. It is based on two factors.
 - i) The degree of completion of the task – non completion means no time points.
 - ii) Completion points + time (around the full course). The faster you do the task the more the points.
 - iii) You will have a running total, but only (up to) your best 8 tasks will count at the end.
 - iv) Don't expect every task to score equally, they are close, but slight task length differences will be reflected in the scores
- f) Task dropping – to clarify. Only the best 8/14 tasks will score so you could either
 - i) Drop your lowest scores if more than eight tasks attempted
 - ii) Decide not to do certain tasks if they are inconveniently located

- iii) Decide not to attempt if you feel they don't suit for any reason such as experience level, don't know area, complexity, safety factors, going shopping etc.
- g) They are spread as equally as possible across all regions/to take most wind directions and try to avoid closed periods or 'members only' sites. It means you may have to be prepared to travel a little however. Most are closed tasks - you can land back at the start (you don't even have to land, tagging the goal cylinder is enough) and try again or do other things). They are not like open xc where you land and that may be the day over. The main rules cover all other details. (refer to them). For 2019 a single open flight to goal has been added at the request of a Club.
- h) All (but one) of the tasks (except Hike n Fly) are site based to avoid retrieve hassles and allow CP rated pilots to attempt.
- i) DON'T forget that all start cylinders are EXIT and to set your instrument according or it may not advance to TP1 automatically. Don't set start times unless you intend to, BUT if you do set them early and late as any start that does not comply with a start time will not advance through the task.
- j) DON'T forget to put your name into your instrument so igc's can be identified.
- k) Read and note the safety disclaimer within the main rules.

Setting up the routes

Downloading the waypoints to your instrument or app is straightforward. For some pilots the navigation elements are well established, for others less so. Setting up the routes requires some care and thought, ensure the order and cylinder sizes are correct. Always do a check run through. For some this may be the subject of further practise. To make it easy there are downloads of the full tasks for xctrack, xcsoar, LK8000 (all apps). Other instruments may require a task to be set up.

Many are familiar with gpsdump from the xcleague. It's a very useful free download free and the latest version 5.28 can be found here (useful if you wish to change a file format to suit your instrument eg .wpt to .cup)

<http://www.gpsdump.no/>

From this point on it depends which instrument or app you choose to use as some are easier and more accommodating than others. For example xcsoar will allow you to build all the tasks and then store them for future use and once on the hill you can browse and load your selected task very quickly. Xctrack will also store all the tasks (Solid Explorer is the recommended file manager), this means that a multi TP task with a variety of cylinder sizes takes little time to set up. If you decide on the hill to fly a different task then it's a bit of a pain to load in a new route unless you're using an app. I've just mentioned two of the most common apps, if you use FlySkyhy, Flyme or another means of navigation then it's your responsibility to know how to use it but they are excellent alternatives.

Similarly with instruments My Flymaster will only take a single task with no facility to store routes on the instrument and it isn't the fastest to set routes up on. The Oudie will store routes - again, whatever you use, get to know its navigation functions.

HIKE & FLY tasks (IMPORTANT – set recording interval to 15 – 20 secs)

There are four tasks for those who feel fit and inclined enough to take them on. If you fly in a mountain area then hiking and flying are part and parcel of the daily experience. That is why it is felt fitting to set the challenges, yet keep them a distinctly separate part of the Northern Challenge Trophy. Some love them, others can happily give them a miss. The four tasks are:

The Dales Three Peaks (35k) (Whernside, Ingleborough, Pen y Ghent)

The Lakes Three Summits (54k) (Skiddaw, Scafell Pike, Helvellyn) -

The Bob Graham (68k) (A clockwise tour round the main summits of the BG)

Western Dales/Howgills (45k) (Sedbergh, The Calf, Wild Boar, Great Knoutberry, Calf Top)

The Challenge is to be flown in the order given in compliance with the rules below.

ANY BHPA member is welcome to attempt these tasks.

The Dales Three Peaks (34k)

The starting point is Ribblesdale (not Horton in Ribblesdale) this is deliberate, there are factors that make it the better start for a paragliding challenge. The extra TP to the north of Whernside is to ensure it complies as an FAI triangle. Also Remember if you wish to enter the DHPC, Role of Honour for flying the three Peaks without landing you can't just tag cylinders – you need to go around the outside of the trig points. Otherwise simply hike or fly the task.

The Lakes Three Summits (54k)

Again, the Latrigg start was decided as the best place to go from. This is a bigger challenge both in terms of size and seriousness so you need some proper preparation and ideally have a support person. It is acceptable to do it over 48hrs (time limit) if you're prepared to bivvy en-route (but you can't nip home for a comfy bed ... this has to be a single push; not bits).

The Bob Graham (68k)

Starting and finishing in Keswick, it is based on the famous Bob Graham round. Again, like the Lakes Three Summits, it requires a fit and accomplished pilot and to make it easier, good flying conditions plus sound planning/support. It has a 48hr max time limit.

The Western Dales/Howgills (45k)

A new companion route to the Three Peaks – just a little longer. After a Sedbergh start, it makes use of the Howgills, then veers into the western Dales via three excellent flying hills – two of which are in the guides. Eventually, via Calf Top (Barkin) it returns to Sedbergh.

Some rules/notes that apply to ALL Hike n Fly Challenges.

- 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 send an sms to 07808394895 shortly before the start and again at the end.**
- b) A minimum of 40% of the total distance must be flown. Given that you can pick your conditions over a 1st February to 31th October period that should be easily possible.
- c) 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, footwear. If in doubt check first.
- d) 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 the tp cylinders were tagged and a start and finish time is recorded.
- e) 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.
- f) You may consider it safer and more efficient to attempt the task with one or two others.
- g) If you feel your 'plan' may challenge the spirit of H&K please contact me (EC) in advance to have it checked out.
- h) **The Lakes Three Summits and the Bob Graham have 48 hr max time limits.** Your igc will only be scored up to that point from a definite recorded start time.
- i) **The Western Dales/Howgills both have 24 hr max time limits.**

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION: Whether Whernside, Skiddaw or the Howgills, they take a variety of wind directions. For example, Skiddaw as a site is regarded as a SW to SSW but it also takes many other directions and for the H&F NE to E may have extra benefits. Similar is Whernside ... regarded as a SE to ESE site but WNW may be better. The Howgills has a lot of into wind faces too.

You must carry an EN certified reserve parachute and wear a certified helmet.

Finally, if you are not sure of anything ... ASK!

Ed Cleasby

January 2020

