

## KITEMAKERS' COMPETITIONS

# 1

## GETTING ORGANIZED

### OVERALL OBJECTIVES

When starting to organize any kite event, from the smallest local flies to AKA's National Convention, it's important to keep key objectives in mind. Among the most important is that **the event is supposed to be enjoyable — even fun! — for everyone**, including those responsible for its organization and operation. Over the years, it has been forcefully demonstrated that, for the National Kitemakers' Competitions to be enjoyable for all involved, **they must be completed promptly**. (An awards ceremony can be conducted on a subsequent day.) The procedures described in this booklet are intended to create well-organized, intelligent, equitable, and enjoyable National Kitemakers' Competitions.

This booklet documents the process by which AKA's National Kitemakers' Competitions will be conducted at AKA's Annual Conventions and provides guidelines to facilitate an orderly and effective management of those competitions. It is intended that these guidelines be widely disseminated so that the competitors will understand the rules of the National Competition.

Competitive events should attempt to advance knowledge about kites and kiteflying, including their artistic and technical components. Kitemakers' Competitions are also for the purpose of honoring the efforts and imagination of persons who invest substantial time and effort in creating high-performance, attractive, well-crafted, and innovative kites. Excellence against a comprehensive set of standards will be rewarded.

### ADVANCE PLANNING

Producing a Kitemakers' Competition requires a considerable amount of advance planning on the part of the Event Coordinator, who has many critical functions to perform, including establishing the overall framework for the competition, publicizing and disseminating information, and enlisting the aid of a support crew.

A general overview of the program must be kept in mind when organizing a competition. Considerations such as obtaining required permits, site planning, selecting judges and field officials, scheduling events, providing for logistics and communication, registering the competitors, tallying scores, selecting award winners, documenting the event, conducting the awards ceremony are among the important tasks that must be accomplished within a relatively short period of time.

Defining and delegating particular tasks allows Event Coordinators to spend their time performing their duties with minimal stress. Planning far in advance of a competition will ensure the success of an event for the participants and audience alike.

The guidelines and requirements outlined in this booklet provide the Event Coordinator with the tools necessary to operate an event that has continuity and standardization. Following these rules and requirements will legitimize any Kitemakers' Competition. These guidelines allow for the flexibility needed to operate in different locations.

## **FIELD STAFF AND OFFICIALS**

A well-run National Kitemakers' Competition will require between 15 and 20 volunteers for smooth operations. Local Kite Clubs that are affiliates of the AKA are a logical source of persons to serve as field staff and officials due to their interest, knowledge and enthusiasm for kiting. Many local club members are AKA members who are familiar with kiting events and competitions. Kite Clubs provide a wealth of eager volunteers willing to participate in putting an event together. Be aware that all staff members are volunteers who are donating their time to make your competition possible. Be courteous and reasonable; provide for the comfort of your staff.

### **Functions That You Will Need to Perform**

The following functions must be performed to run a viable event. Ideally, you will have one or more persons to fulfill each function. Many individuals can fill most of these positions; the exceptions are Judges and Event Coordinators, who need in-depth kiting experience. All others can be briefed prior to the event as to the exact nature of their duties. Field Officials should wear some form of identification while in the competition arena. All positions are required except those of Staging Officer, Launch Assistants, and Photographer. One person can take on more than one position so long as the duties of each position are filled, but one person cannot fill positions that need to be performed simultaneously.

<b>Event Coordinator</b>	The Event Coordinator is responsible for planning and organizing the event. This person will obtain AKA sanctioning of the event, arrange for all necessary permits, publicize the event, choose all other staff, make up schedules, and disseminate information about the event.
<b>Head Judge</b>	The Head Judge is responsible for selecting and managing the judging staff. He or she gives work assignments and makes necessary schedule or field changes as necessary. The Head Judge makes the final decisions on all protests, ties, and rules not covered in this rulebook.
<b>Operations Manager</b>	The Operations Manager is in charge of the entire field, layout, operation, and schedule. The Operation Manager schedules the Judges, Scorekeepers, Field Directors, Staging Officer, and Safety Crew.
<b>Field Marshall</b>	A Field Marshall will be in charge of the flow of action on each competition field. The contestants, Staging Officer, Messengers, and Safety Crew will be under the direction of the Field Marshall of a particular field. The event will be timed by the Field Marshall. The Field Marshall will be in charge of field set-up and clean up.
<b>Judges</b>	Judges are responsible for determining the scores of each kitemaker.

They record their scores on judging sheets and pass their scores to the Messenger, Scorekeeper or Head Judge. It is recommended that five Judges apiece (but, in no circumstance, less than three apiece) be used for judging:

1. Kite Flight and Flight Handling,
2. Aesthetic Visual Flight Appeal,
3. Craftsmanship, and
4. Structural Kite Design.

A total of ten judges is recommended for the first two criteria, which will be judged while the kites are in flight, and a total of ten judges is recommended for the third and fourth criteria, which will be judged after the kites have been brought down to the ground. As the judging in the air and on the ground occur at separate times, the ten judges for the in-flight criteria may also judge the on- the-ground criteria. Thus, **ten is the recommended total number of judges at the National Kitemakers' Competitions.**

**Registrars**

The registrars take competitors' entry forms and issue the competitors' identification numbers. The Registrars record each entrant's name and competition number on master score sheet. They collect all pertinent information and direct the contestants to the flying arena.

**Scorekeepers**

Scorekeepers are responsible for preparing score sheets and for the collection and tabulation of scores.

**Announcers**

One or more persons will staff the public address system to inform spectators and contestants about the event. Announcers should be able to discuss kites and competitions in general, the rules of the specific event, and give details about contestants which have been provided on entry blanks.

**Staging Officer**

The Staging Officer is in charge of the flier order. The Officer guides the fliers into and out of the performance arena.

**Safety Crew**

The Safety Crew is responsible for keeping spectators out of the competition arena. They will make fliers aware of unsafe conditions or improper behavior.

**Launch Assistants**

Volunteers should be available to help contestants launch their kites in the competition arena (when necessary).

**Messengers**

Messengers or runners will take judging sheets from the Judges to the Scorekeepers and will provide other assistance to the Field Marshall and Head Judge as requested.

**Photographer**

It is useful to have a photographer on hand to create a visual record of the competition's entrants and winners.

**Combining Functions**

It is sometimes useful to have one person perform several of the functions listed above. This is particularly true for smaller, regional festivals (but less so for the National Kitemakers' Competitions). For example, the Event Coordinator, Operations Manager, and the Head Judge positions may be filled by the same person. Scorekeepers and registrars may share duties, and launch assistants and messengers may

share duties. By combining functions, you can reduce the overall numbers of persons needed to run the competition.

## SCHEDULING EVENTS

Kitemakers' Competitions can include many kite categories of competition, plus Special Awards, depending on the number of competitors and the size of the event. Each kite category is judged on four different criteria. Judging requires two parts: judging while in flight (flight and aesthetics judging) and judging on the ground (craftsmanship and structural design judging).

Scheduling is a critical part of an event. Smaller events can reduce the number of competitive categories if there are few contestants, but the judging criteria must remain the same. Usually, there should be at least four contestants entered in a category for a competition to be conducted for that category at AKA's National Kitemakers' Competitions.

Wind and weather play a large role in planning for an event. Conditions can never be determined ahead of time, but some considerations of types of kites and when to fly them might aid in scheduling an event. Schedule light wind kites early in the day and heavy wind kites after noon.

The National Kitemakers' Competition will use a printed schedule that will inform contestants and other interested parties when a particular type of kite will be judged. Approximately one-half hour will be allowed for each competitive category. To the extent possible, the schedule for the competition will be announced in advance (for example, by publication in *Kiting*).

## LOGISTICS

Site planning should be a major consideration. Diagrams defining the competition arena should be drawn up prior to the event. The layout of the field will depend largely upon the prevailing winds and the judging procedure. The field should measure at least 250' by 250' and the path of traffic determined in advance. Remember to lay out the field so that spectators will have excellent viewing opportunities.

Communications are essential! Contestants need to know when events are taking place or if there is any change in the schedule. A central Command post should be set up where registration, information, and schedules are posted. A 10' x 20' tent could serve as the required focal point.

A well-stocked and well-staffed **First Aid Station** is highly recommended for any major kite festival.

## SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

A **sound system** should be provided. (For the sound system, and for the scorekeeper's computer, it will be necessary to have **electrical power** on the field.) An announcer should inform the audience and performers about

- the event,
- when and where the activities will happen,

- biographies of the fliers (prior to their flights),
- sponsors of the event,
- the kites and their histories,
- upcoming events, and
- other information as necessary.

One section of the stage or tent should shelter the sound equipment.

**Portable hand radios or radio headsets** allow for interaction between the Announcer, the Head Judge, Registrars, Field Directors, and Event Organizer. A minimum of four headsets that leave hands free and can be switched to at least two different bands will aid in running a smooth event.

Event organizers who provide **tents, food, shade, tables, chairs, and water** keep their volunteers performing at their peak. Nearby **toilets** help to keep schedules on time. A happy crew ensures a successful event.

**Judging kits** need to be assembled in advance of the competition. These should include clipboards, pens or pencils, lists of judging standards for each criterion (see Chapter 6), judging sheets, and a Judge's badge, nametag, hat, or clothing. There will be separate judging sheets for each kite category (see Appendix C). Each category and its identifying letter will be identified on each judging sheet. AKA's Kitemakers' Competitions Committee and the AKA Archives will have judging sheets, tally sheets, and scoresheets to be used for creating the judging kits for the National Kitemakers' Competitions at AKA's conventions.

**Registrars should have the following supplies:** tables and chairs, lots of registration forms, copies of the rules to distribute to participants, lots of pens and pencils, felt-tip markers for making the contestants' identification numbers (see Chapter 4), safety pins, clips, or kiteline to attach the numbers to the contestants, and paper weights to keep papers from blowing.

Scorekeepers may require a **personal computer** plus a sheltered location, with tables and chairs, for its use. Hand-held calculators, pens, and paper are often also necessary.