



The Weather Break Rules & Penalised Break Rules

In the "Time Limit Rules" you will have noted that if a permitted "Weather Break" is taken then the timing will be stopped on the third wing rock of the start of the break and re-started on the third wing rock signalling the beginning of the second part of the sequence.

So, what is a Weather Break:

To fully understand the Weather Break Rule we also need to understand the Penalised Break Rule and Interruption of Program Rules. We will look through these in order starting with the weather break, then the penalised break and finally the Interruption of Program Rules.

The AAC Rules define a weather break as:

2.48 Weather Break

2.48.1 If the height of the cloud base is less than the minimum height specified for the particular category (table 4.52) plus 1000ft, the Contest Jury will allow one weather break to be made. The competitor is thus allowed to readjust height without penalty before re-commencing the sequence.

Note; The minimum height of the cloud base shall be sufficient to permit operations in VMC at the upper limit of the box for each category. It is the PIC's responsibility to ensure VMC is maintained during the flight.

2.48.2 Even though a weather break may be allowed without penalty by the Contest Jury, there is no obligation for a pilot to interrupt their flight.

2.48.3 If the cloud base subsequently rises to the minimum specified, the justification for a weather break is removed. Following advice from the Contest Jury, the CD or CJ will give pilots at least 10 minutes' notice that the optional weather break has been rescinded.

So, basically if the cloud level is below the Upper Height limit plus 1000ft of your category you are entitled, should you wish/choose, to take a break or interrupt your program at the end of a figure and climb without penalty. (note: table 4.52 actually refers to Rule 2.52, Table 2.53 of the 2021 AAC rules)



The Weather Break Rules & Penalised Break Rules

The CIVA Rules refer to the Weather Break as Permitted Breaks and state:

3.6.5. Permitted Breaks

3.6.5.1. The International Jury may allow flights to be made in two parts, during the performance of all Programmes other than the Final Freestyle, if the height of the cloud base is between the heights given in the table at paragraph 3.6.4.6.b) or if the relevant density altitude exceeds that stated in paragraph 3.6.2.6. The competitor is then allowed to adjust his height and location without penalty to commence the second part.

3.6.5.2. The pilot may choose where to take this break without stating so in advance, and such break need not be marked on Forms B or C (respectively R or L). However, second or subsequent breaks will be penalized in accordance with paragraph 4.3.8. **When an interruption occurs along the secondary axis, the competitor must resume his or her flight in the same direction of flight.**

3.6.5.3. If the cloud base subsequently rises to the higher figure in the table, pilots may no longer interrupt their flight without penalty. Pilots will be advised by the Contest Director (or his staff), with a minimum of a 10 minute warning, following advice to him from the International Jury, when they are to fly with/without interruption should the weather conditions change.

3.6.5.4. Even though an interruption may be allowed without penalty by the International Jury, there is no obligation for pilots to interrupt their flight.

As can be seen the AAC rules follow the CIVA rules closely except they don't make mention of the rule of starting in the same direction as when taking a break on the secondary / "Y" axis. This is something one would need to clarify with the Jury and Chief Judge at the beginning of any Australian Competition.

The other rule difference between CIVA and Australia with weather breaks is made mention in CIVA rules under Penalised Breaks but there is no mention in ACC rules.

CIVA Penalised Breaks rules state:

3.6.6. Penalised Breaks

3.6.6.1. **In the event that a pilot interrupts the sequence after a figure is flown incorrectly, with completion on the wrong heading or in the wrong attitude, the break will always be penalised.** Following a penalised break, a subsequent interruption may be considered a permitted break according to paragraph 3.6.5 if it is taken after a correctly-flown figure.



The Weather Break Rules & Penalised Break Rules

3.6.6.2. After a penalized interruption, there is no obligation for the pilot to resume the sequence in a direction determined by the flight before the interruption.

Thus, even if the figure is zero, PZ or HZ, but is completed on correct heading and attitude, then the break would be seen as a weather break. All subsequent breaks will be penalised breaks.

The AAC Rules don't have a Penalized Break Rule as such but do have "Programme Interruptions" rules, which are:

2.55 Programme Interruption

2.55.1 A competitor will be given penalty points if he or she interrupts his or her program. Interruptions will be signalled by the competitor by dipping the wing three (3) times immediately one after the other. Penalty points will be awarded unless:

- a) The competitor was requested to break by the Chief Judge, or
- b) The competitor was requested to break by the Radio Operator, or
- c) The competitor was permitted a weather break in accordance with section 2.48.

2.55.2 Following a programme interruption, the competitor must restart his or her programme with the figure;

- a) in which the interruption occurred,
- b) immediately preceding the point of interruption, or
- c) immediately following the point of interruption.

2.55.3 In no case shall a figure that has already received a score (even if zero) prior to a programme interruption be re-scored.

2.55.4 Should the competitor restart his or her programme at any point other than provided for, the competitor will incur an insertion penalty.

2.55.5 The addition of a figure to a sequence will also result in an insertion penalty, but all subsequent figures correctly flown will be marked. For example, if the additional figure flown is a repeat of the previous figure, the score for the original figure must be retained, even if zero.

2.55.6 Under no circumstances should a competitor be allowed to gain an advantage due to any additional figures.



The Weather Break Rules & Penalised Break Rules

2.55.7 A pilot who has taken a penalized interruption following an HZ figure ending in the wrong direction MUST recommence the sequence in the correct direction in order to regain sequence continuity.

So as can be seen by the Australian Rules it does not specify whether the weather break must occur on the completion of a figure in the correct direction and attitude or not. Another point that should be checked at the beginning of an Australian competition with the Jury and Chief Judge.

CIVA also has Interruption of Programme Rules and Insertion Rules as listed below:

4.3.8. Interruption of a Programme or Insertion of Figures

4.3.8.1. A competitor will be given penalty points, in accordance with the appropriate tariff, if he or she interrupts his or her programme by rocking the wings three (3) times one after the other, in accordance with 3.10.2.

4.3.8.2. Following a programme interruption, the competitor must restart his or her programme with the figure:

- a) immediately preceding the point of interruption;
- b) in which the interruption occurred;
- c) immediately following the point of interruption.

In no case shall a figure that has already received a score (even if zero) prior to a programme interruption as in 4.3.8.1 be rescored.

4.3.8.3. Should the competitor restart his or her programme at any point other than provided for in 4.3.8.2, the competitor will be given additional penalty points in accordance with the appropriate tariff.

4.3.8.4. The insertion of a figure to a sequence will also result in penalty points, but all subsequent figures correctly flown will be marked. For example, if the inserted figure flown is a repeat of the previous figure, the score for the original figure must be retained, even if zero. Under no circumstances should a competitor be allowed to gain an advantage due to this inserted figure.

Whilst unlike AAC rules which allow for a non-penalised break if called by the Chief Judge or Radio Shack, CIVA rules do cover this and some other allowed breaks elsewhere in their rules and we will look at these in the next article.