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Andrew Crites* (acrites@uw.edu), University of Washington, Department of Mathematics, Box 354350, Seattle, WA 98195-4350, and **Sara Billey** (billey@uw.edu), University of Washington, Department of Mathematics, Box 354350, Seattle, WA 98195-4350. *Pattern avoidance and affine Schubert varieties of type A.*

Schubert varieties in finite dimensional flag manifolds G/P are a well-studied family of projective varieties indexed by elements of the corresponding Weyl group W . In particular, there are many tests for smoothness and rational smoothness of these varieties. One key result due to Lakshmibai-Sandhya is that in type A the smooth Schubert varieties are precisely those that are indexed by permutations that avoid the patterns 4231 and 3412. Recently, there has been a flurry of research related to the infinite dimensional analogs of flag manifolds corresponding with G being a Kac-Moody group and W being an affine Weyl group or parabolic quotient. In this paper we study the case when W is the affine Weyl group of type A or the affine permutations. We develop the notion of pattern avoidance for affine permutations. Our main result is a characterization of the rationally smooth Schubert varieties corresponding to affine permutations in terms of the patterns 4231 and 3412 and the twisted spiral permutations. (Received February 22, 2011)