

KUJAWY POMORZE
POLAND 2021

GORDON BENNETT



TORUŃ 2021

Airport of Pomerania Aero Club (EPTO)
Toruń, Poland

19-28.08.2021

INTRODUCTION

In the Aerostation world, a prestigious long distance & international championship for gas balloons (FAI competition) exists since 1906. This race is known as the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. *The race takes place every year.* The winner is the balloon having travelled the longest distance in a straight line between departure and landing site.

The winning team has to organize the event in its country 2 years later. Gas balloon endurance can exceed 70 hours and the flight altitude of a gas balloon is generally above the inversion layer. Usually the flights stay below FL150 and pilots actually prefer to fly as low as possible to increase their endurance.

Do not mix up with Hot Air balloons which have a couple of hours endurance and fly near the ground.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF GORDON BENNET BALLON RACE

- Scheduled start: Friday, Aug 20th 2021, 17.30 UTC. Due to weather conditions, alternative take-off slots up to Monday, Aug 23rd 2021, 04:00 UTC.
- Destination unknown, depending on wind forecasts and weather conditions. More information will be available days before the event.
- Up to 17 contenders from 6 countries
- 2 pilots on-board of each gas balloon
- Two-way 8.33 MHz VHF radio communication available
- Mode S transponder on board of each balloon
- Balloons are equipped with GPS localizers
- Strokes and beam lights on board
- Oxygen supply
- Survival equipment for overseas flights
- ELT (Emergency Locator Transmitter)
- Live tracking and constant communication with the crews at race HQ
- Centralised command & operations centre in Torun/Poland will provide 24/7 flight supervision and support
- Satellite GSM communication device
- FPLs will be filed in advance for each gas balloon, no AFILs
- Entry & overflying permissions are requested from all possibly concerned European countries
- Request permissions for all FIRs
- If deemed necessary – NOTAM publication is requested by respective countries

2021 GORDON BENNET RACE

As Polish balloon team (Mateusz Rękas & Jacek Bogdański) have won the 2018 race with a distance of 1145,29 km, the 2020 Gordon Bennet race was supposed to start in Poland, according to the tradition. The pandemic situation has however made the organizers to put off the event until 2021.

The last Gordon Bennett Cup in Poland took place in 1936. Since then, Poland won twice – first in 1938, however the competition was cancelled due to World War II outbreak, and for the second time in 1983, when the competition was organised for the very first time after the WWII. Unfortunately, because of the political situation in the country the next edition in 1984 could not have been held in Poland and was organised in Switzerland instead.

17 teams from six countries will take part in this year's competition.

TIME & LOCATION

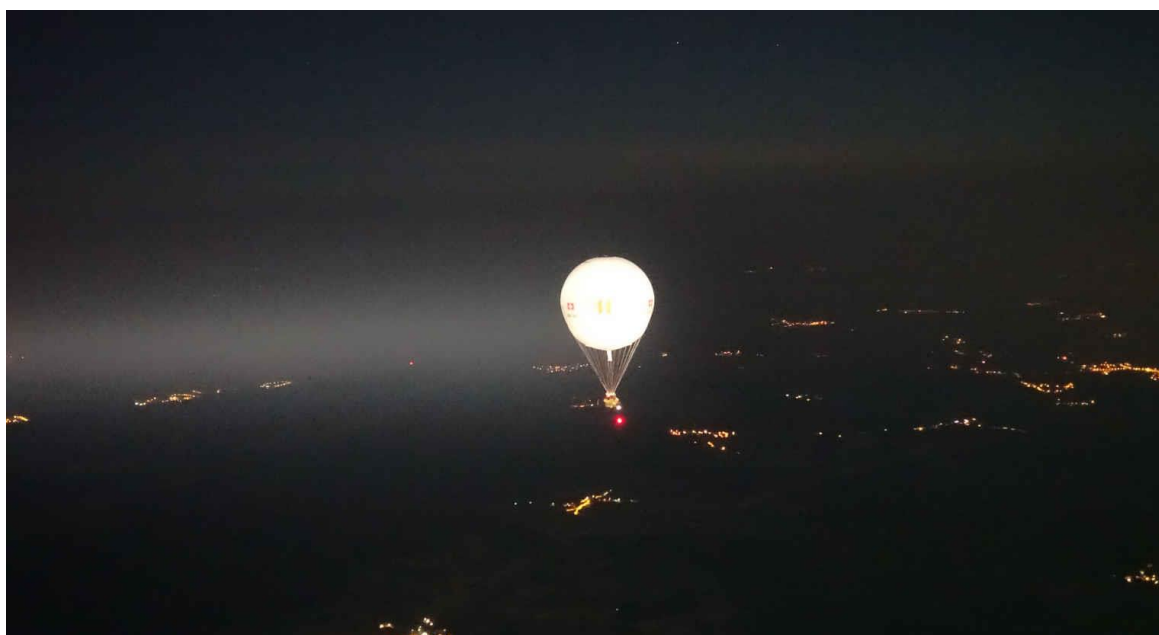
The launch of the balloons will be held in Toruń, the Airport of Pomerania Aero Club (EPTO). The first take-off slot is scheduled for Aug 20th 2021 at 17.30 UTC, but a delay up to Aug 23rd 2021 04.00 UTC may be expected if necessary to assure a safe and successful race start. The exact day&time window will be decided by the event director.



53°01'45"N 018°32'45"E



1st slot: 20.08.2021, 17.30 UTC



BALLOON CHARACTERISTICS

- Volume: up to 1000 m³
- Basket: 2 passengers/pilots
- Gas balloons (do not mix with hot air balloons)
- Strobe and beam lights, survival equipment for oversea flights, ELT, oxygen supply onboard
- Two licensed pilots onboard of each balloon

CNS :

- 8.33 MHz VHF Radio
- Mode S Transponder
- GPS localizers
- Aeronautical maps and documents with ATC com frequencies

All gas balloons shall apply visual flight rules according to the regulation (EU) No. 923/2012 Standardised European Rules of the Air.

SUPPORT TEAM

Headquarters:

- 24 hrs operation located in Torun
- Staff: competition director, weather expert, ATC coordinator, flight handler, safety officer

Chase:

- Each balloon owns its ground crew which follows the balloon with a car and trailer, in order to reach the landing site as soon as possible after landing.

FLIGHT AND ROUTE PROFILE

Decisions about Route and Flight altitude are taken and communicated a few hours in advance.

The route and flight altitude depend on weather & wind conditions.



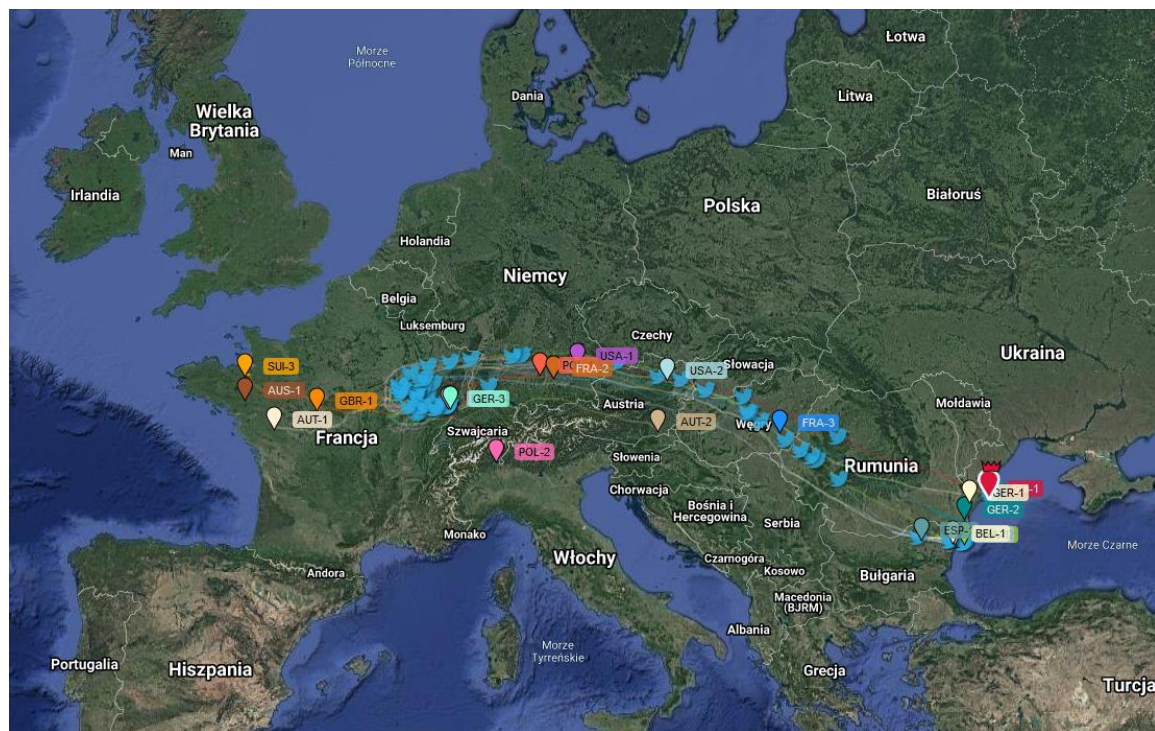
Vertical flight profile of Gordon Bennett 2019 race winning team

GORDON BENNETT AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

The main goal of the race is travelling the longest distance. Therefore, balloons need ATC-clearances for airspace class B, C, D and E, in night and day VFR. Exemption for class A VFR is also requested, if possible.

However, the Flight Event requests balloon teams to keep constant radio contact with air traffic controllers also in airspace class F and G (night and day). Being able to fly VFR during the night is essential for the success of this race as the balloons are not able to land and continue the race the next day. The vertical flight path of a gas balloon is commonness stable with smooth variations only due to day heating or night cooling. As balloons can't manage their drift direction differently by changing altitude, the simplest way to ensure separation is to request the balloon to maintain a specific altitude and veer off other airplanes and airspace users.

However, please note that due to the fact of the competitor's various race strategies and different useable wind streams, it is most likely that only 5-10 gas balloons will be entering your respective airspace within approximately the same time frame. Past race trackings have shown that the balloons will be entering at different times.



Flight paths of Gordon Bennett 2019 race competitors

Strategic coordination (planning phase):

- Diplomatic clearances
- ATC requests: VFR in class A, B, C, D, E airspace / VFR in military airspace / VFR by night

Tactical coordination (in-flight):

- FPL/NOTAM
- FPL filing per gas balloon in advance, no AFIL
- Direct contact to ATC:
 - The Flight Event Office at Torun includes ATC-experts (experienced French and Swiss ATC and procedural experts) and Polish Airspace Management specialists, who will continuously conduct the surveillance of each in-flight team through the live tracking system (<https://live.gordonbennett.aero/>) and communication to the balloon's own command centre.
 - Permanent high-profile weather analysis are made so that the HQ is able to know at least 12 hours in advance which countries and airspaces are most likely to be penetrated.
 - The ATC Team in the HQ can be reached 24 hours a day during the race (dedicated phone number communicated later).

OUR REQUESTS

The Flight Event Team kindly requests to obtain the following permissions:

1. Entry permission into your airspace
2. Night VFR permission (means exemption in case of prohibition in national rules)
3. VFR flight up to FL140 in all classes of airspace (A-G)
4. Crossing of special use areas like R/D/TRA areas (i.e. military areas)

We also kindly request you to forward us to a person from both: your national Air Navigation Service Provider and Civil Aviation Authority, who will be **in charge of coordination the above requests**.

Phone numbers of the **supervisor position in your ATC units** will also be appreciated for smooth tactical coordination during the race.

**CONTACT
OUR TEAM**

Flight Event Director, Benoit Pelard:

Mobile: +33 6 08 24 89 25

ATC Coordinator, Michal Staniewski:

E-mail: michal.staniewski@pansa.pl

Mobile: +48 603 412 283

***If this message/letter with our permission request is addressed to the incorrect department,
we kindly ask you to forward it to the appropriate department
and provide us with the correct contact info (telephone number, email-address).***

For further information or any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of the above mentioned persons. Thank you very much in advance for your kind assistance & cooperation and we gladly hope to obtain the granted permissions for this very special and exiting international event.

A smooth, coordinated and safe operation is our main objective.