



Contact:

Emmy Dillon

571-286-8390

Publicity@airraceclassic.org

45th ANNUAL AIR RACE CLASSIC STARTS JUNE 21 IN LAKELAND, FLORIDA

115 WOMEN PILOTS SET TO COMPETE IN 45TH ANNUAL AIR RACE CLASSIC

May 13, 2022 – More than 100 women pilots will take off on the adventure of a lifetime when the flag drops to mark the start of the 45th annual Air Race Classic (ARC), the oldest airplane race of its kind.

Starting at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, June 21, 50 small airplanes will launch full throttle, 30 seconds apart, down the runway at Lakeland Linder International Airport in Lakeland, Florida. From there, they will embark on a course that will take them from Lakeland, Florida for a 2,548-mile competition that ends Friday, June 24 in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Teams will face unfamiliar terrain and challenging weather as they put their piloting skills to the test, flying at maximum speed across twelve states. At each stop along the way, they will execute a high-speed low pass across a timing line, racing to reach the Terminus, Terre Haute, Indiana by the arrival deadline at 5 p.m. on Friday, June 24.

The eight intermediate stops are Moultrie, Georgia; Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Hattiesburg, Mississippi; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Ada, Oklahoma; Lawrence, Kansas; Mt. Vernon, Illinois; Tullahoma, Tennessee; and a flyover in Washington, Indiana.

The Air Race Classic traces its roots to the 1929 Women's Air Derby, aka the Powder Puff Derby, in which Amelia Earhart and 19 other daring female pilots raced from Santa Monica, California, to Cleveland, Ohio. This year's ARC celebrates the 93rd anniversary of that historic competition, which marked the beginning of women's air racing in the United States. Today, the ARC is the epicenter of women's air racing, the ultimate test of piloting skill and aviation decision-making for female pilots of all ages and from all walks of life.

“Every June, female pilots from across the nation fly the ARC for the competition and camaraderie,” said Air Race Classic President Lara Gaerte. “We look forward to celebrating the 93rd anniversary of the Women’s Air Derby as we welcome back veteran racers and meet new competitors at our Start in Lakeland, Florida.”

This year’s racers range from college students to a veteran competitor in her 90s. Some are flying the ARC for the first time, while others have dozens of races in their logbooks. Each race plane carries a team of two or three women: pilot, copilot and an optional teammate. Of the 50 teams in this year’s race, 18 are representing colleges or universities. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds including students, teachers, doctors, airline pilots, business owners, professionals and air traffic controllers.

Race Teams must fly VFR during daylight hours only and are given four days to make flybys at each en route timing point and then land at the Terminus. The race route changes each year and is approximately 2,400 statute miles in length with 8 or 9 timing points.

How long it will take each team to finish the race depends on the weather, the pilot’s strategy and the speed of the airplane. The fastest planes may complete the course in two days, while the slowest airplane may take all four days. Because the ARC is a handicap race, teams race against their own best time. This allows slower planes to compete against faster airplanes on an equal basis.

Official standings aren’t determined until after the last team crosses the finish line – the last arrival at the Terminus may, in fact, be the winner!

ARC fans can follow the racers’ progress on airraceclassic.org.

ABOUT THE AIR RACE CLASSIC Air Race Classic Inc. is an all-volunteer, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization with a mission of encouraging and educating current and future female pilots, increasing public awareness of general aviation, demonstrating women’s roles in aviation, and preserving and promoting the tradition of pioneering women in aviation. For more information, visit airraceclassic.org. Follow Air Race Classic on Facebook. On Twitter: @AuthenticARC