

December 9, 2019

To: FAI / CIA

From: National Aeronautic Association, Balloon Federation of America
With approval from the Aeroklub Polski

Nomination for CIA Montgolfier Diploma for 2019 Sporting Year Best Performance in Gas Ballooning

Krzysztof Zapart, Poland



Andy Cayton, USA

Narrative: The basis for this nomination is the epic gas balloon flight co-piloted by American Andy Cayton and Krzysztof Zapart from Poland, winning the 2019 America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race by an impressive distance. They traveled 2598.61 km and 58 hours 12 minutes. This was more than 450 km farther than the excellent second place team of Leys/Deceillieres.

As impressive as their flight performance was, also impressive is:

The flight team they assembled.

The excellent flight plan they carefully planned and executed.

Their courage to continue to fly when others opted to terminate their flights.

Their determination to win!

Flight Information: Andy and Krzysztof were the last team of nine competitor teams to launch from the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Park for the start of the 2019 America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race. They lifted off at 9:28 p.m. on Monday evening October 7, 2019. While the other balloons flew higher and faster, their flight strategy was to initially fly at a lower (but slower) altitude in an effort to maintain as much of a northerly direction as possible, before climbing and turning east over the mountains.

At 2 a.m. Wednesday morning, they were over 320 km behind the leaders. By morning daybreak, several of the other teams had landed in Minnesota USA leaving only two teams in front of Andy and Krzysztof. They were now heading into the challenging lake ridden providence of Ontario Canada. By 2 p.m. they were about 220 km behind the lead French team of Leys / Decellieres. With sunset approaching, and also getting close to entering a “no man’s land” region of Canada, the lead French team landed.

By the time that Andy and Krzysztof were able to surpass the French teams distance mark, it was getting dark and they needed to fly through the night. By, Thursday morning October 10 at 7:45 a.m. with the massive Hudson Bay body of water approaching, they were able to land in the Canadian tundra region near the ominous Polar Bear Provincial Park. An amazing flight!

For this notable gas balloon flight, we proudly nominate Andy Cayton and Krzysztof Zapart for the Montgolfier Diploma, Best Performance in Gas Balloons 2019.

Sincerely

Orvin E Olivier
Awards Chairperson
Balloon Federation of America

America's Challenge 2019 Gas Balloon Race Flight Map

