

FEDERATION AERONAUTIQUE INTERNATIONALE

COMMISSION D'AEROSTATION DE LA FAI

FAI BALLOONING COMMISSION



Final Version June 4, 2014

New changes highlighted in yellow

RULES & REGULATIONS

58ème COUPE AÉRONAUTIQUE GORDON BENNETT
FAI World Long Distance Gas Balloon Championship
Vichy/France

Based on MER (Model Event Rules); *Version 2012 including changes approved by the Plenary as of 23.-24. March, 2014*

Secretariat of FAI
Avenue de Rhodanie 54, CH-1007 Lausanne, Switzerland
Tel: +41-21-345 1070 Fax: +41-21-345 1077 e-mail: sec@fai.org

INTRODUCTION

The rules and regulations for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett consist of:

These competition rules
Rules laid down in the April 1980 meeting of the CIA
FAI Sporting Code

CHAPTER 1 COUPE AÉRONAUTIQUE GORDON BENNETT DETAILS

1.1 TITLE

This event shall be known as:

58ème Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett
FAI World Long Distance Gas Balloon Championship

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett are:

- a. to determine the team covering the greatest distance;
- b. to promote the development of the sport of gas ballooning by an international comparison of pilots' performance and balloon materials;
- c. to promote international relations and friendships among all ballooning nations and pilots.

1.3 DEFINITION OF THE WINNER

The winner shall be the team covering the greatest distance.

1.4 ORGANISERS

Fédération Française d'Aérostation & the Société des Courses de Vichy – France

1.5 CORRESPONDENCE

All entries and official correspondence should be addressed to:
FEDERATION FRANCAISE D'AEROSTATION
6, rue Galilée – 75116 PARIS - FRANCE
E-mail: ffa@ffaerostation.org

1.6 PERSONNEL

Event Director: Stefan Handl
Safety Officer: Rainer Hassold
Stewards: Martine BESNAINOU (FRA)
Jury President: Hans Akerstedt
Jury Member: Johann Furstner
Jury Member: Lindsay Muir

1.7 DATE AND PLACE OF COUPE

The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett will be held in Vichy / France.
The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett will be held on August 28 – September 6, 2014.

1.8 TIME

All times before launch in Local Time. Launch Time and all times after that in UTC

1.9 LANGUAGE

The official language of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett shall be English

1.10 DOCUMENTS

The following documents may be inspected when pilots register on arrival at the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett:

- a. Pilot Certificate
- b. Pilot Log Book
- c. Balloon Registration Document
- d. Balloon Airworthiness Document
- e. Certificate of Insurance for the declared competition area
- f. Valid FAI Sporting License pilot and Co-pilot
- g. Passport or other Identity Document
- h. Proof of International Radiotelephone qualification for Pilot in Command
- i. Valid electronic or paper aeronautical charts (ICAO or Jeppesen) for all countries inside the competition area.

Participants may be asked to submit copies of all or a part of the current (valid for the period of the event) documents for the Pilot in Command as well as for the aircraft intended to be flown. This submission date shall be communicated within 4 weeks of the closing entry date and shall not be earlier than 6 weeks after that closing entry date.

CHAPTER 2 ENTRY CONDITIONS

2.1 PARTICIPATION

The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett is open to all NACs which have met their obligations to the FAI. Each NAC may nominate up to three balloon teams, each consisting of two pilots who must have the nationality of the NAC having entered them. The NAC must nominate the pilot in command for each aerostat entered, and this person will be responsible during the whole flight. He or she will be mentioned first in the official reports.

2.2 PILOT LICENSES AND EXPERIENCE

Both pilots must hold a valid LTA license (free balloon) and a FAI Sporting License issued by their NAC. Pilots must either hold a passport or an identity card from the nominating NAC's country, or they must have held a resident's permit from the nominating NAC's country for the preceding 5 years. The pilot in command must have been authorized to be pilot in command of a gas balloon for at least twelve months prior to the start of the Coupe and must have had at least 50 hours experience as pilot in command at the entry closing date and must be authorized to fly at night.

The pilot in command must be able to communicate with Air Traffic Control in English and have sufficient experience in operating the navigation aids

2.3 ENTRY FEE

The entry fee for the event is € 750 including hydrogen, 2 double rooms per team for 5 nights, Pilot pack, 4 Invitations for the Opening Ceremony for each team, 4 Invitations to Award Banquet for each team + 2 Meals for 4 people (or 4 if launched delayed until Saturday evening).

2.4 CLOSING ENTRY DATE

The closing entry date for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett is April, 25, 2014.

2.5 ACCEPTANCE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

Pilots and their crews are required to know, understand, accept and abide by the Sporting Code and the rules and regulations for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett.

2.6 WAIVER

By entering the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett the pilots waive any right of action against the organizer, the owner of any site and their respective members, employees or personnel for any loss or damage sustained by him in consequence of any act or omission on their part or on the part of other pilots.

2.7 INSURANCE

Pilots must provide proof that their balloons are insured for at least 3.500.000 Euro for third party liability during the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. Insurance may be purchased from the organizer. Organizers will arrange the process for any additional liability insurance they may require.

CHAPTER 3 BALLOON QUALIFICATIONS

3.1 DEFINITION OF A BALLOON

For the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett a gas balloon is defined as an aircraft lighter than air, supported statically in the air, with no means of propulsion by any power source and which obtains the buoyancy solely as a result of the difference in weight of the lifting gas and the surrounding air.

In modification of the 1980 Rules, Article 6, only gas balloons with a maximum capacity of 1000 cubic meters may participate in the Coupe. A tolerance of 5% is allowed. Organizers are empowered to inspect any aerostat that they suspect is in violation to this rule.

3.2 AIRWORTHINESS

Aerostats flown in the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett must have current certificates of registration and airworthiness, or in place of the latter, an equivalent document from the recognized authority of the nation concerned. The organizers are empowered to reject any aerostat which in their opinion is not of a reasonable standard of airworthiness.

3.3 HIRED BALLOON

Pilots may enter balloons hired in another country.

3.4 FLAGS

Each balloon must bear the national flag of the pilot's country, not less than one square meter.

3.5 BALLAST

Only water or fine sand may be used as ballast. Jettison of anything other than sand or water should only be done in case of an emergency and in no case if there is the possibility of harm to people or animals. Violation of this rule should be penalized according to rule 6.4.

3.6 No envelope may be jettisoned at landing.

3.7 TRANSPORT

Transport of the balloon to the launch field in Vichy and after landing to the home city of the balloon is at the expense and responsibility of the pilots. Balloons have to be at the launch field by Friday, August 29 at 12:00 local time.

CHAPTER 4 INSTRUMENTS, EQUIPMENT AND OTHER

4.1 FLIGHT INSTRUMENTS

Each balloon must carry at least;

- Altimeter
- Variometer
- Barograph or other altitude recording device
- 720 channel VHF radio, minimum 5 watt radio plus back up radio
- Minimum equipment for balloons registered after November 2013: new 8.33 Mhz channel spacing radio system.
- Strobe light with minimum brightness required for aircraft
- Beam light for night landing
- GPS
- Life raft or survival suites shall be carried for any anticipated flight over large bodies of water
- Transponder Mode S
- ELT each balloon will be equipped with a Digital 406 MHz S-ELT or EPIRB which should contain an integrated analog (121.5 MHz) homing beacon and be registered with Cospas-Sarsat.

Balloons and the minimum equipment are subject to physical inspections at any time between the latest arrival time on the launch field (see 3.7) and take-off. Pilots may be asked to show evidence of the airworthiness and conformity of all aircraft components (envelope, net, basket etc.) with applicable aviation laws for the airspace they intend to fly in during the event.

Additionally, each balloon will carry a GPS logger/tracking device provided by the organizer. Organizers will publish information regarding balloon altitudes during the flight – if GPS logger/tracking devices are not able to securely transmit altitude information.

There is no restriction in the use of navigation aids and flight control instruments. Every balloon should be equipped with sufficient oxygen and appropriate distribution system to be used at altitudes greater than 12,500 feet MSL. Faulty barographs or altitude recording device may be penalized under rule 6.4. In case of suspected altitude violations, barographs or backup altitude recording device (GPS) may be checked. Each balloon should carry a backup GPS that would constitute a back-up tracking log in case of tracker failure. Transponders shall be turned on before launch and kept on in all air space where required. If transponder is turned off it should be noted on pilots ATC log.

4.2 TRACKER SIGNAL

If it can be proved that the signal from a balloon Tracker has been modified, or interfered with, then the Competition Director has authority to penalize the balloon pilot's final result.

4.3 OTHER EQUIPMENT

Every balloon must be equipped with a filling hose 20 meters long with the necessary amount of sand bags for inflation and flight. At launch each balloon must carry at least 20 liters of water for ballast over airports, highways or other sensitive areas.

4.4 MAPS

The official competition map will be the map as stated in rule 1.10 (h).

4.5 BALLOON MEISTER

The competitors are responsible for making their own arrangements for balloon meisters.

CHAPTER 5 RACE AND PRIZES

5.1 TYPE AND PURPOSE OF RACE

The race is a First Category Event of the FAI and consists of a distance flight. The final classification will be based on the greatest distance covered. The distance will be measured by determination of the arc of the great circle in accordance with the Sporting Code, Section one Aerostats.

5.2 HOLDER OF COUPE AÉRONAUTIQUE GORDON BENNETT TROPHY

The nationality of the team who wins the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett trophy determines the NAC which will hold the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett two years later.

5.3 PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The preliminary race results will be published within 24 hours after the command center has been notified of the landing of the last balloon.

CHAPTER 6 FLIGHT RULES

6.1 FLIGHT CONDITIONS

All flights will be carried out under Visual Flight Rules.

6.2 LAUNCH

Weather permitting the balloons will launch on Friday, August 29 after 16:00 local time. A delay to Sunday, August 31, 2014 before 12:00 local time may be used if necessary to assure a safe and successful race. The order of departure will be decided by two separate draws according to Article 8 of the General Rules (1980). In clarification of the 1980 Rules, Article 8, all balloons will launch within a time window fixed by the Director. As a guide, balloons will be launched at intervals between three and five minutes as long as it is safe to do so. Launch masters will give each crew permission to launch.

Permission to launch does not relieve the pilots of complete responsibility for his take-off, including adequate lift to clear all obstacles and other balloons and to continue safely in flight. If a pilot is not ready for take-off at the appointed time, he shall move to the end of the launch order.

6.3 AIRSPACE

Pilots must be familiar with and abide by the applicable aviation regulations of the countries. Pilots may be required to log all ATC clearances given in route; these must be returned to the Event Director in a sealed envelope for investigation in case of suspected violations. Infringements of Aviation regulations are in the first instance a matter between the pilot and the Aviation Authorities. If the Director receives information from an Aviation Authority that air law may have been violated, he should investigate and take action as appropriate. Pilots who are not able to comply with ATC instructions will be penalized under 5.2.2.2 of the FAI Sporting Code, General Section.

6.4 PENALTIES

Penalties will be based on the FAI Sporting Code, General Section. In a case where a technical infringement of the rules or failure to comply with requirements caused by mistake or inadvertence has occurred and no advantage has been attained, the competitor concerned will, as a guide, be penalized by a reduction of not less than 2% of the best distance. Serious infringement, such as dangerous or hazardous actions or repetitions of lesser infringements will be penalized by a reduction of not less than 5% of the best distance. Unsportsmanlike, behavior (GS 5.2.2.3); which includes, deliberate attempts to deceive or mislead officials, intentional airspace violations, falsification of documents or repeated serious infringements of rules should, as a guide, result in disqualification.

6.5 AIRSPACE PENALTIES

Failure to comply with airspace regulations or requirements given to pilots may result in penalty even though pilots may receive individual ATC clearance.

CHAPTER 7 LANDING

7.1 LANDING

The precise point at which any part of the aerostat's basket, car or gondola comes to rest on the ground or makes more than brief contact with any water surface, or anything attached to, or resting on, the ground or water is the landing point. Momentary contact with the ground or water does not constitute a landing, nor does contact between a trail rope and the ground, unless the aerostat is moored. Pilots landing on water such as lakes, seas, or rivers will not receive a result.

7.2 CALCULATION OF LANDING POSITION

The point of landing will be defined by the geographic co-ordinates in degrees and minutes longitude and latitude. Other evidence is to be considered if necessary.

7.3 REPORTING

Landing position shall be telephoned to the Command Center within four (4) hours of landing. The Event Director should grant an extension in case of extenuating circumstances.

CHAPTER 8 OBSERVERS

This Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett is run without observers. Rules in chapter 8 do not apply.

8.1 OBSERVERS

An observer is a competition official responsible to the chief observer. His duties are primarily the impartial recording of particulars of positions, times, distances etc. achieved during the flight. He also has the duty to report any apparent infringement of these rules or of air law, and any case of inconsiderate behaviour towards landowners or the public by any competitor or crewmember.

8.2 APPOINTMENT

At the General Briefing an observer will be appointed to each team.

8.3 ASSISTANCE

An observer may not assist the competitor with advice at any time. He should not attempt, and is not qualified, to amplify, explain or interpret the rules to a competitor. If he wishes, and is invited by the competitor, he may assist in the ground handling and inflation.

8.4 OBSERVER ON RETRIEVE

The observer will occupy a seat with a window in the retrieve vehicle. He may not drive the vehicle. He may assist with map reading during the retrieve if asked to do so by the crew, and at their responsibility.

It is the duty of the pilot and crew to convey the observer back to the competition center after measurement of the landing point and recovery of the balloon.

In the event that the team does not return to < location of event *> immediately after landing, they may convey the observer back to the competition center by public transportation. The sealed barograph (or trace which has been removed from the barograph in the presence of the observer) and the landing report should be returned with the observer. The cost of food and lodging and any transportation for the observer is the responsibility of the pilot.*

CHAPTER 9 COMPLAINTS AND PROTESTS

9.1 COMPLAINT

Complaints concerning any matter should be made to the Competition Director at the Competition Center. Complaints should be in writing in English and will receive a written reply.

9.2 PROTEST

If dissatisfied with the Competition Director's reply to a complaint, a competitor has the right to make a protest to the International Jury. Protests should be handed in at the Competition Center to an official who will record the time of receipt. Protests shall be accompanied by a deposit of 100 Euros.

A competitor presenting a protest may make a verbal presentation of his case in addition to his written statement. The verbal presentation may not exceed fifteen minutes, except by leave of the Jury. A competitor not fluent in English may be assisted by an interpreter. The deposit will be returned only when the protest is upheld.

9.3 TIME LIMIT

The time limit for protest is 10:00 hours on September 2, 2014 or four hours after publication of the official results, whichever is later. Protests must be handed in within two hours of reply to a complaint.

CHAPTER 10 LIABILITY AND SAFETY

- 10.1** The balloon and other property of a competitor shall be at the risk of the competitor at all times. By entering the Coupe a competitor agrees to waive all claims for injury to himself or loss or damage to his property.
- 10.2** By entering the Coupe a competitor assumes all liability for injury, loss or damage to third parties or their property and agrees to indemnify the organizers in respect thereof.
- 10.3** A competitor remains completely responsible for the safe operation of his balloon at all stages of inflation, launch, flight and landing. He must ensure that his equipment, his crew and his own level of skill and experience are suitable for the conditions in his own judgment.
- 10.4** All meteorological reports and forecasts and other safety or navigational information is provided in good faith for the guidance of competitors. Officials will be appointed to regulate the inflation and launching of balloons.

**MINUTES OF THE CIA MEETING, 10 & 11 APRIL, 1980 REGARDING
COUPE AÉRONAUTIQUE GORDON BENNETT,
amended at the CIA Meeting March 2008
*amended at the CIA Meeting March 2011***

I. ORIGIN AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

ARTICLE 1:

With a view to maintaining the tradition of the free balloon race entrusted in 1905 by Mr. James Gordon Bennett to the Federation Aéronautique Internationale, it is agreed that the challenge will continue to be run under the name of “**Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett**” As an option organizers may additionally use in the second line as a subtitle “The FAI World Long Distance Gas Balloon Championship”.

ARTICLE 2:

The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, which will be a distance flight competition, shall be organized once every year and conform to the FAI Sporting Code and the provisions of the present rules.

ARTICLE 3:

Originally only the General Conference of the FAI, on a recommendation from FAI’s Commission Aéronautique Sportive Internationale (CASI), had the right to amend the present rules. The right to change these rules was transferred to the CIA in 1984 (see CIA Minutes 1984, item VIII). In 1987 the CIA changed the Sporting Code Section One to reflect, under 6.2, that the CIA has full control of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett rules.

ARTICLE 4:

It is the responsibility of the NAC holding the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett to organize the competition in its country two years after winning the Coupe. However, if for any reason this NAC renounces its prerogative, or it fails to meet any of the event requirements of deadlines published by the CIA, the CIA may entrust the organization of the event to another NAC
If the holder renounces the organization of the race, it should inform the FAI Secretariat within two months following the competition in which it was the winner.

The NAC organizing the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett shall be responsible for all costs of the event.

ARTICLE 5: PARTICIPATION

Only NAC members of the FAI shall be able to participate in the race for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. They may not enter more than three balloons each.

ARTICLE 5.2: PROCEDURES for hosting the GORDON BENNETT

After the competition results have been declared final by the event jury, the CIA President shall immediately send a letter to the winning NAC specifying the requirements and deadlines that shall be met. The winning NAC must have their intention to bid – to organize the concerned Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett event – submitted to the FAI Secretariat within 60 days of the Jury declaring the event finished.

In case the winning NAC positively intends to bid, this NAC has a deadline of June 30th of that following year – about 14 month prior to the concerned event – to submit the bid.

If the winning NAC shows no intention to bid for the concerned Gordon Bennett, they will lose their opportunity to automatically host the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett that was earned by their winning the Coupe. In this case the CIA will immediately notify all eligible NAC that bids will be accepted for the concerned Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett –with June 30th as the (same) deadline to submit the bid.

Ensuing/resulting bids, supported by the completed bid files and the FAI/CIA Organizers Agreement signed by the organizing NAC and event Organizer shall be received by June 30th of the intermediate bidding year unless these time limits are changed by the CIA under special circumstances.

The bids will be reviewed by the appropriate CIA WGs to determine the best venue for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, The concerned CIA WGs shall then send their recommendations to the CIA Bureau for the official CIA sanction to be granted approximately 13 months before the concerned event. The CIA is empowered to accept or reject such bids.

Fallback Option: Second round of bidding.

If the original bid (of the winning NAC) fails up to the deadline of June 30th, a second round of bidding is established with the same procedure as above. This second round has a shortened 90 days deadline – which would still leave a minimum of 11 month preparation time for the bidding organization.

In addition to the Sporting Code requirements, the bids must contain at least the following information:

- Budget for the event and proposed funding guarantees
- Proposed location and venue
- Proposed Event Director and operation team
- Guarantee for the availability of gas for the entire flight window listed in the bid application
- Letter from the relevant ATC authorities declaring cooperation for the entire event
- Guarantee that night VFR will be allowed
- Detailed information on Entry fee and specifically what it encompasses.

II. GENERAL RULES

ARTICLE 6: BALLOON CATEGORIES

Only AA gas balloons with a maximum capacity of 1 000 cubic meters may participate in the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. A tolerance of 5% is allowed. All balloons – whatever their capacity – shall be filled with gas having the same specific weight and the same chemical composition. Pressurization of the balloon to maintain a constant density altitude shall not be permitted. In 2005 the CIA accepted the use of both, Helium and Hydrogen as lifting gases during the same Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett competition.

ARTICLE 7: THE CREW

During the entire duration of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, the crew for each balloon shall be composed of no less than two persons. The pilots shall be of the nationality of the NAC having entered them. Pilots who have been a resident for the preceding five years in the same country as the NAC entering them shall be eligible to be nominated by that NAC. The nominated team numbers will remain the same as nominated by the NAC.

ARTICLE 8: DEPARTURE

The order of departure will be decided by two separate draws. The first will fix the order of departure of the NACs. The second will fix the order of departure of the different balloons of each NAC. The balloons will depart in the following order:

The first balloon of the first NAC;-
The first balloon of the second NAC;
The first balloon of the third NAC; etc.
The second balloon of the first NAC;
The second balloon of the second NAC;
The second balloon of the third NAC etc.
until all balloons have taken off.

All balloons shall fly on the same day in the time bracket set by the organizer.

ARTICLE 9: CLASSIFICATION

The final classification will be based on the greater distance covered. The distance shall be measured by the determination of the arc of the great circle, in accordance with the General Section of the FAI Sporting Code.

III. SPECIAL RULES

ARTICLE 10:

The organizing NAC shall publish the special rules at least six months before the date of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett.

ARTICLE 11:

The special rules shall indicate:

- a) the place and date of the race;
- b) the amount of the cash prizes;
- c) the date of entry and the registration fee;
- d) the compulsory equipment required;
- e) the facilities offered to competitors;
- f) any other important information.
- g) The list of potential open countries for the competition must be published 60 days in advance of the event. Countries open for the competition must be open to all participating pilots and teams.

**IV. AWARDING OF THE COUPE AÉRONAUTIQUE
GORDON BENNETT TROPHY**

ARTICLE 12:

The organizing NAC shall decide on the awarding of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. The results shall in principle be circulated within 15 days after departure. The prize shall be given to the winner in the month following the publication of the results.

ARTICLE 13:

The NAC whose team wins the race will be the holder of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett for one year. An NAC shall become the final holder of the cup after winning three consecutive races.

ARTICLE 14:

For the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett to be considered as valid a minimum of three countries shall be entered.

ARTICLE 15:

If an NAC holder of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett disappears or ceases to be a member of the FAI, the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett shall be handed over to the FAI Headquarters.

V. THE OFFER OF A NEW COUPE AÉRONAUTIQUE GORDON BENNETT

ARTICLE 16:

The NAC which becomes the final holder of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett has the right to offer a new Coupe. If within one month this NAC has not informed the FAI of its intention to use this right, the FAI may accept a new Coupe from another NAC or another source.