



**PRESS RELEASE**  
For immediate release

## **Austria-2 wins the 67<sup>th</sup> Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett after nail-biting finish**

Münster, Germany, 17 September 2024 – **In a breath-taking conclusion to the 67th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, Christian Wagner and Stefanie Liller of team Austria-2 emerged victorious. The duo clinched the win after an exhilarating journey from Münster, Germany, covering an impressive distance of 2111.16 km aboard their gas balloon before touching down in Sagres, at the southwestern tip of Portugal.**

The competition, which began on Saturday, September 14, saw **21 gas balloons take to the skies**. Wagner and Liller's remarkable flight lasted 2 days, 20 hours, 34 minutes, and 40 seconds, culminating in a very dramatic finish on Tuesday, September 17.

**The race's climax was particularly intense** as three teams – Austria-2, Switzerland-1, and Germany-3 – converged on the Portuguese coast from different angles. Austria-2 and Switzerland-1 even approached from over the sea, putting their piloting skills to the ultimate test. All three leading teams landed less than three kilometres from each other, showcasing the fierce competition.

**Switzerland-1, piloted by Kurt Frieden and Pascal Witprächtiger**, claimed second place with a distance of 2109.88 km, despite being the first to land. **Germany-3, with Andreas Zumrode and Axel Hunnekuhl** at the helm, secured third place, touching down last but covering 2108.47 km.

Fans worldwide experienced Wagner and Liller's first Coupe Gordon Bennett victory in real-time through **livestream tracking** and regular updates on the official Gordon Bennett TV YouTube channel.

After the launch the participating teams all headed south-west in a pack, travelling through Germany and Luxembourg during the night. The teams flew through France during Sunday, with three teams landing safely in France on Sunday 15 September, leaving 18 balloons to travel through a second night towards the Pyrenees and Spanish border or further north over the Bay of Biscay. **Twelve teams flew through a third night.**

The teams will return to Münster on 20 September for the Welcome Back party and attend the prize-giving at the Awards Ceremony on 21 September.

### About the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett

The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, the FAI World Long Distance Gas Balloon Championship, is the oldest and most prestigious event in aviation and the ultimate challenge for the pilots. It is a story full of adventure, skill, courage, survival and luck. The goal is simple: to fly the furthest non-stop distance from the launch site.

The international competition was initiated by adventurer and newspaper tycoon James Gordon Bennett Jr. in 1906, when 16 balloons launched from the Tuileries Gardens in Paris, France. Little did the crowd of 200,000 spectators know that this race was to continue throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The next edition of the race will take place in Metz, France on 5 September 2025.

The official results remain subject to final confirmation by the FAI jury.

## Editor's note

- [Livetracking & leaderboard](#)
- [Event Website](#)
- [GB Facebook](#)
- [GB Instagram](#)
- [GB X](#)
- [Images](#)
- [Youtube \(Gordon Bennett TV\)](#)
- TV distribution via [Quattromedia](#):
  - Launch: Online Clip #1, incl. press release
  - Within 12-24h after last balloon lands: Online Clip #2 with winners, incl. press release
  - Within 12-24h after last balloon lands: TV News with interviews
  
- [FAI logo](#)
- [FAI media corner](#)

## About FAI

FAI, the World Air Sports Federation, is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Drones, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic activities and Space records.

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For more details, please contact the FAI:

Faustine Carrera  
Communication Manager  
0041 21 345 10 70  
[communication@fai.org](mailto:communication@fai.org)

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