

66th Gordon Bennett Cup Distance Competition Unofficial Results
October 11, 2023, 12:00pm: Team France-2 Unofficial winner, flying 1653.72 mile.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: media@balloonfiesta.com

Albuquerque, NM – The 66th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, sponsored by BayoTech, has concluded. Team France 2 flew an unofficial distance of 1653.72 miles and are the unofficial winners of the 66th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. Pilots Eric Decellières and Benoît Havret landed less than 53.9 miles from the coast near Jacksonville, North Carolina at 10:59am MDT, surpassing Team Germany 1 by a difference of 46.1 miles. Team France 2 was airborne for a total of 85 hours and 49 minutes.

Once it is confirmed as an official distance, this will be Decellières and Havret’s first Gordon Bennett championship title. The Team France 2 duo finished second in the 2021 Gordon Bennett, and have two top five Gordon Bennett finishes and four top ten Gordon Bennett finishes to their credit. Decellières, flying with the great Gordon Bennett champion Vincent Lëys, came in second in the 2019 America’s Challenge. This year, the winning team set a distance record for French competitors for this type of distance race.

Team Germany 1 pilots Wilhelm and Benjamin Eimers landed with an unofficial distance of 1607.62 miles; flying for a total of 85 hours and 19 minutes. If the 2023 results are confirmed, this will mark Wilhelm’s tenth 2nd place finish.

Team France 1 flew an unofficial distance of 1466.40 miles, Team USA 1 flew an unofficial distance of 1382.31 miles and Team USA2 flew an unofficial 1210.23 miles. If the results for these three teams are confirmed they will finished third, fourth and fifth in the 66th Gordon Bennett Cup.

The gas balloon pilots and crew will return to Albuquerque for the award ceremony on Saturday, October 14, 2023. Unofficial results are pending jury confirmation.

Unofficial Team Results (12pm MDT 10/11/2023):

Team #	Position	Country	Distance (km)	Distance (miles)
FRA-2	1	France	2661.40	1653.72
GER-1	2	Germany	2587.22	1607.62
FRA-1	3	France	2359.95	1466.40
USA-1	4	USA	2224.62	1382.31
USA-2	5	USA	1947.68	1210.23
ESP-1	6	Spain	1727.17	1073.21
GER-2	7	Germany	1648.86	1024.55
AUT-2	8	Austria	1496.42	929.83
USA-3	9	USA	1461.6	908.20
AUT-1	10	Austria	1165.42	724.16

GBR-1	11	United Kingdom	1091.89	678.47
POL-1	12	Poland	978.02	607.71
POL-2	13	Poland	872.48	542.13
GER-3	14	Germany	494.20	307.08
LTU-1	15	Lithuania	395.76	245.91
SUI-1	16	Switzerland	293.33	182.27
FRA-3	n/a	France	n/a	n/a

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. 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 67th Coupe Aeronautique Gordon Bennett will launch from Münster, Germany, in 2024.

For the most up-to-date information and to track the balloons in real-time, please visit the official Gordon Bennett Cup website at <https://balloonfiesta.com/Gordon-Bennett-2023> and our dedicated tracking site at <https://live.gordonbennett.aero>. Don't forget to tune in to [Gordon Bennett TV](#) for event coverage and insights.

About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta & Gordon Bennett Cup

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, powered by ExxonMobil, is the host for the 66th Gordon Bennett Cup. The Balloon Fiesta is a festival of hot air balloons that takes place in October in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. For details on events, schedule, entertainment and photographs visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on Twitter [@BalloonFiesta](#) and Facebook