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A race for the planet, a race for humanity

The World Air League has created a historic, first of its kind race for lighter-than-air airships, blimps and zeppelins. An epic aviation tour consisting of 18 individual back-to-back races, that combined, will circumnavigate the entire globe...

Promising to be a spectacular event, the World Sky Race will fill the world's skies with grand and majestic flying machines. These airships are normally seen individually, but this event will circle the world with a competing regatta of these incredible vessels flying over the most significant landmarks on the planet. Included along the route will be famous sights such as Big Ben, the Roman Coliseum, Petra of Jordan, the Great Pyramids of Giza, the Taj Mahal, the Statue of Liberty and Versailles Palace.

First of its kind

In their quest for victory, the sky racing teams will travel from the Prime Meridian southward to Africa and the Middle East, across the Indian Ocean to Equatorial Asia and through the Orient, island hop across the Pacific to the western shores of North America, down to Central America, up to the North Atlantic and crossing back to Prime Meridian for an exciting to finish which will represent the first



full circumnavigation of the globe by an airship. The winner – the airship with the best cumulative time – will be crowned the World Sky Champion. A unique title for a unique achievement. The World Sky Race is both retro and modern – capturing the exciting 1930s atmosphere of exploration, while embracing today's capacity for social networking. For its launch in the fall of 2012, the World Air League and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre have formed a World Heritage partnership. "We're treating this as part of our communications strategy," says Francesco Bandarin, UNESCO Assistant-Director General for Culture. "As an international competition of lighter-than-air airships, this race will not only provide sporting excitement, it will also provide a means of highlighting the diversity of people and places of the world."

Pioneers of the sky

Airships and airplanes once competed for the attention of the world. In the 1920's, airships ruled the skies and the headlines, inspiring a generation of aviation pioneers. The first passenger airlines were zeppelins with routine crossings of the Atlantic between Europe, North America and South America. They challenged the Arctic and flew to the North Pole. In 1929, the Graf Zeppelin flew more than 19,500 miles around the northern hemisphere. "It has been said that the golden age of airships was in the 1920s and 1930s. With the World Sky Race, we will show that the golden age of airships is in front of us. This century will be their century", says Don Hartsell, commissioner of the World Air League. "Today, airships are about being green and taking active measures for the environment. More than 70 years ago, airship technology was proven effective. The World Sky Race will produce a new look at a forgotten solution."

Preserving the environment

There is much competition in aviation today to design and build airships with fuel efficiency capable of long flights and larger cargos capabilities. They can serve a real function as environmentally friendly transport. This means not cutting down rain forests to connect communities in the Amazon River basin to the world. This could put an end to the annual gouging of tundra to build temporary roads crossing the Arctic. The core lighter-than-air physics equation is quite simple: the craft is already in the air. No energy is used for lift. This means a major reduction in fuel to move people and goods. "Airships are a proven green solution," according to Hartsell.

The World Air League is working in partnership around the globe to not only increase awareness of the environmental impact of global transportation, but also to enhance existing as well as develop new and more efficient, environmentally friendly means of tourism, travel and cargo transportation.

Head of the class

During the 180 day event, educational programmes focusing on geography, culture, history, science and environment will be offered to children worldwide. Connecting the global community, these lessons will use the backdrop of more than 130 designated World Heritage Sites and the excitement of a fleet of airships to inspire the children. The World Sky Race will demonstrate that renewable energy is fun.

Adding to the visual impact of the World Sky Race, Mr. Jean-Michel Jarre, UNESCO artist and goodwill ambassador, is the Artistic Director for the World Sky Race. Each of the individual races will have local events which will emphasise the culture and heritage of the region. Coverage of each race and the local events will be broadcast over international networks such as EuroSport, offering people across the globe an insight into this unique event and join the growing community of supporters.

Main picture: The World Sky Race will pass over the world's most famous landmarks

Below: Celebrating the new age of the airship.



International destinations

The World Air League is inviting nations, regions and cities around the world to submit their application for inclusion on this historic route. The route will be finalised and eighteen summit host sites will be selected to participate in and celebrate the inaugural event. Each summit host site will enjoy the artistic freedom to showcase their culture and their unique qualities as a destination. So keep an eye out, the World Sky Race is coming to a sky near you.

CONTACT DETAILS

For further information please visit:
www.worldskyrace.com

