



Media Contact:
Sue Hughes
Aurora, Colorado
720-256-3442

SueHughes@PowderPuffPilot.com

For immediate release

Women's Air Race Classic Announces Winners

Teammates from Michigan and Georgia Pronounced as Fastest Female Flyers

June 30, 2009, Aurora, Colorado – Although the 4-day, transcontinental Air Race Classic ended in Atlantic, Iowa last Friday, its 69 competitors had to wait until Sunday to learn the results of the handicapped air race. Winners of the \$5000 top prize were pilot Kelly Burris, 44, of Pleasant Ridge, Michigan and copilot Erin Recke, 34, of Newnan, Georgia.

Burris—a 950-hour pilot and a patent attorney with the Chicago-based firm of Brinks, Hofer, Gilson, and Lione—owns the 1962 Beechcraft Debonair in which the couple competed for their second Air Race Classic. During last year's race, they were disqualified for entering IMC (clouds), as ARC rules stipulate that all racers must fly under visual flight rules. Recke is a 4000-hour commercial airline pilot with Delta Connection ASA.

Before the announcement, the two had an inkling of their winning performance. "We knew we felt really good about our race," said Burris. That suspicion was confirmed when they received a phone call "very late" on Friday night that their airplane would be inspected in the morning, indicating that they may have finished in the Top 12. After signing their official scorecard, they were given a W-9 tax form to complete, suggesting that they might receive a chunk of this year's \$15,000 purse. It wasn't until the Sunday night banquet that their suspicions were confirmed, and they learned that their plane had the best time (compared to its calculated performance figures).

Burris and Recke flew the sixth airplane to take off from Centennial Airport near Denver on Tuesday morning (June 23), although an early start is not necessarily an advantage since each individual airplane's time starts when it takes off, not when the race starts. The race continued with stops in Liberal, Kansas; Sweetwater and Lufkin, Texas; Russellville, Arkansas; Grenada, Mississippi; Sparta, Tennessee; Jacksonville, Illinois; and Racine, Wisconsin, before a final landing in Atlantic. Burris credited diligence and planning; support from family, friends, and other racers; and the experience from last year's race for her team's success. When asked if she would consider competing again, she responded with a resounding, "Yes! It was way too much fun!" Burris and Recke maintain a blog about their race experience at nocloudsforus.blogspot.com.

This year's competition marked the 80th anniversary of the first women's air race held in 1929, which started in Santa Monica, California and ended 8 days later in Cleveland, Ohio. Of the 20 airplanes registered for the Women's Air Derby that year, 19 took off but only 14 finished. Despite a fatality on the first day, the racers forged on to finish what Will Rogers, the race's Grand Marshall, dubbed the "Powder Puff Derby." With today's sophisticated aircraft engines, radio communications, and GPS, air racing is much less grueling and dangerous as it once was, but nonetheless remains a feat of endurance and skill.



Powder Puff Pilot Press Release

Media Contact:

Sue Hughes

Aurora, Colorado

720-256-3442

SueHughes@PowderPuffPilot.com

For immediate release

This year's field of competitors ranged in age from Jessica Miller, who just finished high school, to Bee Haydu, former member of the World War II-era Women Air Force Service Pilots. In experience, racers varied from student pilot Lydia Baldwin, who raced with three-time Air Race Classic veterans Terry Carbonell and her mother, Caroline Baldwin, to first-time racer and retired airline captain Nancy Aldrich, who raced with fellow Texan Sherry Walker. Among the seven university-sponsored teams, Indiana State University's duo of Jessica Campbell and Victoria Dunbar came in second.

The Air Race Classic, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging and educating current and future women pilots; increasing public awareness of general aviation; demonstrating women's roles in aviation; and preserving and promoting the tradition of pioneering women in aviation. For complete 2009 results and other information, go to www.airraceclassic.org.

Powder Puff Pilot, a sponsor of the Air Race Classic Start in Denver, was founded in 2008 by Sue Hughes of Aurora, Colorado. She has authored *This Day in Women's Aviation*, a page-a-day calendar, and a series of children's picture books featuring Claire Bear, a pink-clad aviatrix. Her first two titles, *The Pilot Alphabet* and *Claire Bear's First Solo*, are currently on sale with a third, *Claire Bear Explains... What Pilots Fly*, in development. For further information or to order Powder Puff Pilot products, visit www.PowderPuffPilot.com or call toll-free at 888-801-6628.

End