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NAA ANNOUNCES THE MOST MEMORABLE AVIATION AND SPACE RECORDS OF 2011

The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) presents its annual list detailing the Most Memorable Aviation and Space Records of the previous year.

Washington, DC, January 31, 2012 -- The National Aeronautic Association (NAA), as the official record keeper for United States aviation and space, each year tracks dozens of world and national record attempts. New U.S. records are certified and those qualifying as world records are then ratified with the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), the world air sports federation. At the end of each year, under the direction of the Contest and Records Department, a list of the "most memorable" is created.

Here is the list for 2011:

Duration: 1 minute, 52 seconds

(record for model aircraft, indoor glider, ceiling height > 98 ft)

From the floor of an airship hangar in Tustin, California, on July 16, Stan Buddenbohm threw his model glider high into the air where it peaked just a few feet short of the ceiling. The glider—constructed of balsa wood and carbon fiber, with a 40-inch wingspan, and weighing just over 2-1/4 ounces—flew for 1 minute and 52 seconds. The previous record (also set by Buddenbohm) of 1 minute, 45 seconds was set in 2010.

Distance: 11,894 miles

(record for jet airplanes weighing 440,924 < 551,155 lbs)

In December, a Boeing 787 completed an around-the-world flight requiring just one fuel stop. The first leg of the flight from Seattle, Washington to Dhaka, Bangladesh, on December 7, covered 11,894 miles, setting a record for distance. Pilots Michael Carriker, Chad Lundy, Gregory McCann, William Roberson, Rodney Skaar, and Christine Walsh broke the previous record of 10,501 miles set in 2002.

Speed Over a Three Kilometer Course: 416 mph

(record for piston airplanes weighing 3,858 < 6,614 lbs)

In a series of four low passes along runway 8-26 at Wendover, Utah, Will Whiteside flew an average speed of 416 mph in his Yak-3. His flight on October 11 beat the previous record of 304 mph set in 2002.

Free Three Turnpoint Distance: 1,321 miles

(record for multi-place gliders)

After releasing from tow above Minden, Nevada, Gordon Boettger and Hugh Bennett flew their Schempp-Hirth Duo Discus glider a distance of 1,321 miles using lift generated along the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Their 13-hour flight on April 21 beat the previous record of 960 miles, which the two set earlier in the year.

Speed Over a Recognized Course, Los Angeles to Savannah: 623 mph

(record for jet airplanes weighing 77,162 < 99,208 lbs)

Departing the Burbank airport in California on January 12, Gulfstream G650 pilots William Dobbs and Ronald Newton flew non-stop to the Hilton Head International airport in Georgia. The 3-hour, 26-minute flight averaged 623 mph along the route, establishing the record for speed from Los Angeles to Savannah.

Duration: 11.4 seconds

(record for human-powered rotorcraft)

Using hand and foot pedals to turn the helicopter's four 42-foot rotors, Judith Wexler flew the University of Maryland's "Gamera" in ground effect for 11.4 seconds. The flight, which took place at the university's campus at College Park, Maryland, on July 13, set a record for duration. Wexler beat the previous record, which she set two months earlier, of 4.2 seconds.

Assembled Mass of Spaceships Linked in Flight: 1,135,569 pounds

(Absolute space record)

Under the command of astronaut Steven Lindsey, the NASA space shuttle Discovery docked with the International Space Station for the last time on February 26. At 1,135,569 pounds, the combined mass of the shuttle orbiter and the space station set a record for assembled mass of spaceships linked in flight. The previous record of 1,043,028 pounds was set in 2010.

The Most Memorable Aviation and Space Records will be recognized at NAA's Spring Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, March 13 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. For more information, please visit www.naa.aero.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering America's aerospace leadership and promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States.

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