



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### NAA ANNOUNCES THE MOST MEMORABLE AVIATION RECORDS OF 2019-2021

**Washington, DC, March 30, 2022** – Ever since the Wright Brothers first lifted off in Kitty Hawk more than 100 years ago, pilots have attempted to fly higher, faster, and farther than their predecessors. As the official record keeper for United States aviation since 1905, the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) has been encouraging pilots to accomplish those feats and documenting their successes. New U.S. records are certified by NAA and those qualifying as world records are then ratified with the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI).

At the beginning of each year, under the direction of the NAA Contest and Records Department, records certified in the previous year are reviewed and a list of the "most memorable" is created. Due to the global pandemic's immense impact on aviation record activity in the U.S and around the world, NAA has delayed the selection of the most memorable aviation records for the past two years. We are now pleased to announce the 11 most memorable aviation records from 2019-2021, listed chronologically below:

*Record for airplanes:*

**Speed Over a Recognized Course, New York to Paris: 420.29 mph**  
(Class C-1.e, Group II—turboprop airplanes weighing 6,614 < 13,228 pounds)

**Dierk Reuter and Phillip Bozek** took off in a Daher TBM 700 from Westchester County Airport in White Plains, New York, at midnight on March 9, 2019. They flew non-stop to Le Bourget airport in Paris, France, completing the 3,600 mile journey in eight hours, 35 minutes. They beat the previous record of 374 mph set by Chuck Yeager and Renald Davenport in 1985.

*Record for parachuting:*

**Largest Canopy Formation, Night: 36 skydivers**  
(Class G-2, general)

On the evening of March 14, 2019, 36 skydivers descended together in formation over Sebastian, Florida—their lighted canopies and pyrotechnics prompting reports of an Unidentified Flying Object. The **Canopy Formation Specialists World Team** broke the previous record set four months earlier by 25 skydivers.

*Record for balloons:*

**Distance: 363.4 miles**  
(Class AX-05—hot air balloons with a volume of 31,800 < 42,400 cubic feet)

Lifting off in a Lindstrand 42A hot air balloon from a school parking lot in Mitchell, South Dakota on March 17, 2019, **Kim Magee** ascended to over 15,000 feet, where strong winds quickly established her on a south-easterly course. She flew for nearly six hours; her flight path taking her

north of Sioux City, Iowa, then past Des Moines, Iowa, to a landing along the Fox River just north of the Missouri border. Averaging more than 62 mph during the flight, she beat the previous record of 270 miles set in 1998.

*Record for parachuting:*

**Largest Formation, Head-Up Orientation: 84 skydivers**

(*Class G-2, vertical formation skydiving, general*)

On their 20th attempt at the record, 84 skydivers jumped from a Skyvan and four Twin Otters at 18,000 feet over Ottawa, Illinois, on July 26, 2019. They then joined together in a vertical, head-up formation, beating the previous record set by 72 skydivers in 2016.

*Record for model aircraft:*

**Distance in a Straight Line: 214.93 miles**

(*Class F3—radio controlled gliders*)

On August 2, 2019, **John Elias** hand-launched his radio controlled model glider from an abandoned airfield near Pioche, Nevada. Then, while riding in the back of a Jeep convertible, he flew the glider northbound along U.S. Highway 93 towards his goal. Seven hours and numerous thermals later, he landed the glider as planned in a field near Wells, Nevada. He beat his own record of 187 miles set in 2016.

*Record for airplanes:*

**Speed Around the World, Westbound: 138.05 mph**

(*Class C-1.d, Group I—piston engine airplanes weighing 3,858 < 6,614 pounds*)

Flying a homebuilt Lancair IV, **Bill Harrelson** departed Ontario, California on December 8, 2019, for Honolulu, Hawaii. He then flew to Jakarta, Indonesia, Cape Town, South Africa, and San Juan, Puerto Rico, landing back in Ontario on December 16—seven days and 14 hours later. He beat the previous record of 123 mph set by Max Conrad in 1961.

*Record for gliders:*

**Speed Over an Out and Return Course of 750 km: 159.82 mph**

(*Class D01—open class, single place gliders*)

On April 24, 2021, **Jim Lee** took off in his Jonker JS-1C sailplane from Minden-Tahoe airport in Nevada, released from tow at 11,000 feet, and proceeded northbound to his start point near Reno, Nevada. He then flew south along the Sierra Nevada mountains to his turnpoint near Owens Lake, California, then back to Reno, completing the round-trip flight in three hours, eight minutes. Not satisfied with those results, he decided to fly the course a second time instead of landing. He shaved 13 minutes off his first run and beat the previous record of 97 mph set in 2019.

*Record for paragliders:*

**Free Distance Using up to Three Position Checkpoints: 379.3 miles**

(*Class O-3, general*)

Using a winch from a field along a highway near Del Rio, Texas, **Sebastien Kayrouz** launched his Ozone EnZo 3 paraglider and quickly headed towards his goal located 346 miles north at Silverton, Texas. Upon reaching Silverton, he decided to continue flying, adding 33 more miles to his distance and finally landing after nearly 11 hours. His flight on June 20, 2021, beat the previous record of 365 miles set in 2019.

*Record for airplanes:*

**Speed Over a Recognized Course, Savannah, GA to San Francisco, CA: 548.80 mph**

(Class C-1.l, Group III—jet engine airplanes weighing 77,162 < 99,208 pounds)

Gulfstream Demonstration Team pilots **Eric Henman** and **Steve Lane** departed Hilton Head International airport in a Gulfstream GVII-G500 the morning of July 24, 2021, and landed at San Francisco International airport four hours, 17 minutes later. They made the nonstop, coast-to-coast flight using Sustainable Aviation Fuel, and became the first to receive NAA's Sustainable Wings Certification.

*Record for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles:*

**Duration: 18 days, 22 hours, 30 minutes**

(Class U-1.7, Group II—fixed wing, electric powered UAVs weighing 55 < 220 pounds)

On August 25, 2021, at the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground in Yuma, Arizona, team members of the **Airbus Zephyr Programme** hand launched the Airbus Zephyr 8 on its long mission in the skies above Yuma. Reaching heights over 76,000 feet, the 85-foot wingspan, 140-pound, solar-powered UAV returned for landing on September 13. They beat the previous record of 14 days, 22 minutes set with the Zephyr 7 in 2010.

*Record for airplanes:*

**Distance Over a Closed Course: 1,268.13 miles**

(Class C-1.d, Group III—jet engine airplanes weighing 3,858 < 6,614 pounds)

On October 30, 2021, **Richard Kane** took off in a Cirrus Vision Jet from Greenville Downtown airport in Greenville, South Carolina, and flew to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, then to Dayton, Ohio, and then returned to Greenville. The four hour, 29 minute, non-stop flight beat the previous record of 480 miles set in 1967.

“Due to COVID, it’s been three years since we were able to hold an event celebrating the most memorable records,” said NAA President Greg Principato. “In the meantime, though, aviators of all types have been hard at work stretching the definitions of what previously had been thought possible. We are so excited to welcome several of them who have set records that will live in memory for a long time to come.”

The record setters will be honored at [NAA's Aviation Record Celebration](#) which will be held on April 28, 2022, at the Lockheed Martin Fighter Demonstration Center in Arlington, Virginia. NAA will also highlight each of the most memorable records from 2019-2022 on social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)) throughout the month of April.

*The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. NAA is the caretaker of some of the most important aviation awards in the world and certifies all national aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit [www.naa.aero](http://www.naa.aero).*