



WELCOME TO AOPA

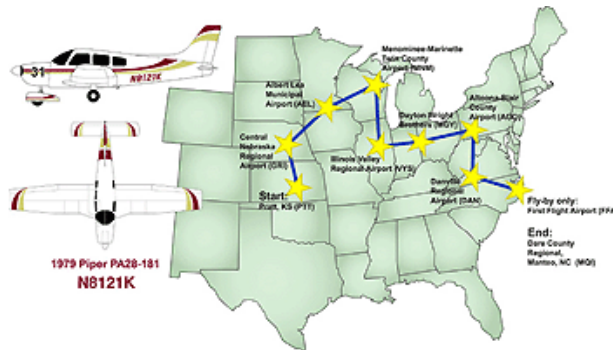
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2003 Air Race Classic



Click above for a larger map image

Follow the progress of ASF's Kathleen Roy and AOPA's Carolyn Smith as they document their cross-country voyage in a Piper Archer (N8121K) during the [2003 Air Race Classic](#), sponsored by the [Ninety-Nines International Organization of Women Pilots](#). This year's air race, scheduled for June 21 - 24, 2003, will cover 2184.4 statute miles. The 2003 Air Race Classic will begin in Pratt, KS and finish in Manteo, NC with a fly-by at Kitty Hawk, NC, helping to commemorate 100 years of manned flight.

Race Airports (Members Only links)

- Pratt, KS - [PTT](#)
- Grand Island, NE - [GRI](#)
- Albert Lea, MN - [AEL](#)
- Menominee, MI - [MNM](#)
- Peru, IL - [VYS](#)
- Dayton, OH - [MGY](#)
- Altoona, PA - [AEO](#)
- Danville, VA - [DAN](#)
- Kill Devil Hills, NC (Fly-by only for timing) - [FFA](#)
- Manteo, NC - [MQI](#)

Race Journal

- [06/27/03 - Return to Frederick](#)
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Return to Frederick

Start: Manteo, NC - MQI
Finish: Frederick, MD - FDK
Distance traveled: 225 nm

06/27/03 - Yesterday, the 2003 Air Race Classic came to an end with an awards banquet at the pavilion at First Flight Airport. Each racer received a plaque, and awards were presented to the top ten race teams as well as teams who had the fastest times on each leg of the race.

Today, race team #31 returned to its home base of Frederick, MD. Carolyn and Kathleen were greeted on the ramp by cheering co-workers.

We had an amazing adventure during the past two weeks and are thrilled that we had the opportunity to participate in the experience. It was both fun and challenging, and we

hope to race again in 2004 to put to use all the knowledge gained this year!

Finish line

Start: Dayton, OH - MGY
Finish: Kill Devil Hills, NC - FFA
Distance traveled: 684 nm

06/23/03 - We finished the race today! After a crystal clear departure from MGY, we stopped in Altoona, PA for fuel. The airport is located among ridges, which resulted in a bumpy approach. After landing, we got a weather briefing and decided to continue.



Carolyn Smith and Kathleen Roy arrive in Manteo, NC, after finishing the air race.

The next stop was Danville, VA (DAN). We had originally planned to spend the night there, but the weather was beautiful today and since we arrived in DAN at 1330, we had plenty of time to fly to FFA. We decided to go on and finish the race one day before the deadline, and we're glad we did. We encountered a tailwind, which made the third leg of the day well worth it.

The race ended with a fly by of the Wright Memorial at First Flight Airport (FFA). It was an experience we will not soon forget. After the fly-by, we landed at Manteo, NC. Many of the racers arrived at the finish line today, but the rest will fly in tomorrow.

An e-mail we received today asks, "How do you decide what altitude will be the most effective for each leg of the route?"

Prior to the start of the race, we studied the race route and sectional charts. By becoming familiar with the terrain, obstructions, and airspace, we chose minimum safe altitudes for each leg. Those altitudes took into account the charted items, as well as our own minimum standards.

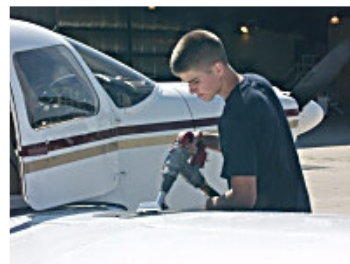
The final decision as to altitude was arrived at after checking the weather and forecast winds before each leg. We wanted to fly where there was a tailwind, but climbing too high would result in a slower groundspeed average. We chose altitudes along the route that were above our minimums, and provided a tailwind if possible.

If you have a question for Kathleen and Carolyn, e-mail asf@aopa.org.

Day 2

Start: Menominee, MI - MNM
Finish: Dayton, OH - MGY
Distance traveled: 485 nm

06/22/03 - Today the skies were clear, though we encountered a headwind en route from MNM to Peru, IL (VYS). This was expected, so we just enjoyed the scenic flight past Green Bay. We made our fly-by at VYS, the first stop of the day. After re-fueling and enjoying a brief rest, we continued on to MGY.



The first stop of the day was Peru, IL (VYS).

The flight from VYS to MGY was two hours, and we landed at 1430. Since we were more than halfway to our destination and the weather forecast for the following two days was clear VFR, we decided to spend the evening in Dayton. We now have three legs of the

race yet to fly, and our deadline for arrival at FFA is 1700 on Tuesday. We plan to finish the race early on Tuesday morning.

We received an e-mail question that asks, "Do you switch PIC duties with each leg? Are there any rules on this according to the Air Race Classic?"

That is something we discussed at length prior to beginning the race. Proper cockpit resource management (CRM) is the only way to successfully manage a two-pilot crew. We decided to switch duties each day, rather than each leg. It makes the flights more organized if each person handles one set of responsibilities per day.

We wrote a checklist of pilot and co-pilot duties. Whoever is serving as pilot is mainly responsible for flying the plane. This includes reviewing the charts and choosing an appropriate altitude, staying on course, and making in-flight decisions about diversions or altitude changes. The pilot also determines the power setting for the flight and reviews the weather forecast for upcoming routes at each airport.

The co-pilot handles all radio communication, and follows the route along sectional charts. She is responsible for knowing the aircraft position at all times. The co-pilot opens and closes each flight plan, and orders fuel at each airport as well as oil, if needed.

Although this is a VFR-only race, the Air Race Classic rules require that at least one of the two pilots on board is instrument rated.

Day 1

Start: Pratt, KS - PTT

Finish: Menominee, MI - MNM

Distance traveled: 730 nm

06/21/03 - This morning began with a FSS weather briefing that included METARs, TAFs, winds aloft, airspace information, and NOTAMs. With VFR conditions and a tailwind, we launched in race number sequence from PTT at 0800 local time.

The first leg ended with a fly-by of Grand Island, NE (GRI). There are 8 airports along the way that each race aircraft must fly by so the racers can be timed. This is a race, after all. Proper radio communication during this part of the race is essential, and safety is the priority. After the fly by, a race airplane may continue on to the next airport or land and refuel before continuing. Since the Archer we are flying doesn't have the range to do two legs at a time, we landed at each airport today and will do that throughout the race.

We enjoyed a 37-knot tailwind en route to GRI. A weather briefing at GRI informed us that our northeasterly route to Albert Lea, MN (AEL) would keep us well north of some rain showers to the south. The tailwind was not quite as strong as the first leg, but we liked it better than a headwind! The weather was beautiful VFR, and after receiving a weather briefing at AEL for the next leg of the race we decided to keep flying.

We ended our day with continued blue skies and a tailwind en route to Menominee, MI (MNM). We decided to stay there for the evening. It was a long day, and we needed to rest and get prepared for another full day of flying on Sunday.



FSS briefers offer weather information to racers before the start of the race.



Racers washed, waxed, and preflighted their aircraft before the early morning departure.

Arrival and Inspections

Start: Frederick, MD - FDK
Finish: Pratt, KS - PTT
Distance traveled: 1005 nm

06/20/03 - After 2 days of flying, we arrived in Pratt, KS, on Tuesday June 17.

On Wednesday, we applied our race number (31) to the aircraft. It was then inspected by race officials. This included a check of the RPM, lights, insurance, and logbooks. We also had our pilot credentials checked, which involved showing our certificates and medicals. Once inspected, the airplanes cannot be flown until the start of the race.

We have been busy since then attending a meeting for first-time racers, safety briefings, and weather briefings. Safety briefings focused on issues such as airspace, temporary flight restrictions (TFRs), weather, and cockpit resource management (CRM). The race will only be flown during day VFR conditions, and we must be on a flight plan. FAA flight service station briefers will be present at the start of the race to assist us with weather briefings and filing flight plans.

We are anxiously awaiting the start of the race Saturday morning. The forecast winds are favorable. Tailwinds will prevail!



Carolyn Smith applies race number 31 prior to inspection.



Kathleen Roy washes the aircraft after arriving in Pratt, KS.

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