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# WOMEN PILOTS FLY!

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## Gold Cup Air Rally 2020



The 20th year of the Gold Cup Air Rally occurred under the most unusual circumstance. Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic talks about the rally being cancelled were not too far from the truth. Yet, despite the challenges 11 planes and 23 women pilots braved to fly. Aside from the usual aircraft and pilot documents that had to be submitted to qualify each pilot were required to complete a mandatory Covid-19 screening. All the aircrafts were flown by female aviators. This cross-country flight is the Canadian version of the Air Race that occurs in the U.S. However, unlike the air race which mostly focus on speed to win, the GCAR challenged the pilots on each leg of the flight with a set of aviation related trivia questions to answer. A scavenger hunt is often included, though it varies depending on who the organizers are. This year the GCAR 2020 were organized by pilots Susan Begg and Asti Livingston who represented Canada in last year's Air

**Above photo:**  
The 23 women pilots who flew in the Gold Cup Air Rally 2020 at Muskoka Airport CYQA in Ontario.

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Race Classic. This year the GCAR 2020 winners were: Mary Norman & Akky Mansikka (1st Place), Rani Tolton & Lauren Nelson (2nd Place), Janet Chesterfield & Jocelyn Lecluse (3rd Place). Sophie Veilleux won the Best for Spot Landing.

Aside from being familiar with their aircrafts' capabilities, flight teams had to learn to work together as they face the challenges throughout the duration of the air rally. Some of the challenges the pilots had to contend with include managing their aircraft engines/systems, performances, fuel planning, weight and balance (as they have added cargo), weather analysis and planning, navigation, communication, problem solving, and task management.

The ladies enjoyed a BBQ lunch at Gore Bay, then bonded by the bonfire at Earlton as they tried to stay warm while camping at subzero temperatures. They made hot breakfasts while camping, had fun doing a scavenger hunt, toured a bison farm, and shared endless stories and laughter as they roasted marshmallows. Fly high ladies!



Photo above: Team 3 pilots Brenda Jolly and Kerstin Kelly check their plane before departing from Gore Bay.



Photo on the left: Organizers of the GCAR 2020 pilots Susan Begg and Asti Livingston land at Muskoka Airport, briefed all the pilots and prepare to judge the Spot Landing Competition.

Flight teams who flew in the GCAR 2020 also include: Suzanne Wiltshire & Lisa Bishop, Jessica Buscher & Cathy Boyko, Marilyn Dickson & Diane Stewart, Kerstin Kelly & Brenda Jolly, Sandrine Gressard & Anita Evans, Bonnie Whaley, Ocean Thomas, Sharron Lutman and Nicole Harris who celebrated her birthday that weekend with her fellow female flyers.

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**“The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.”**

*- AMELIA EARHART*

Photo on the right: Campsite of the women pilots at Earlton Airport during sunrise.



Photo on the right below: Team 1 pilot Sharron Lutman with Ocean Thomas and Bonnie Whaley say goodbye to Team 4 pilots Suzanne Wiltshire and Lisa Bishop as their Cirrus prepares to depart Earlton Airport.

