

## **2005 INTERNATIONAL AIR RALLY ACHIEVEMENTS :**

*Every summer since 2001, the International air Rally is a great occasion for pilots to meet and share a very rewarding and unforgettable flying experience. This year, the “Adventure” was particularly outstanding!*

The 2005 group of pilots presented all levels of competence: some with little experience but motivated, others very experienced and ready to share their knowledge including some limitless and daring ones who flew in from Switzerland onboard a Pilatus PC12 others from California on board a Cessna 182 (NO GPS) who covered nothing less than 2400 NM in a period of 10 days before they went back home cross the ocean and cross the continent again ! *Different pilots different perspectives.....*

The 38 plane armada (23+15) registered for two challenges. On board, 70% USA, Ontario and Manitoba Canada, 30% Quebec, France and Switzerland crews. All bounded rapidly to better manage difficult weather conditions. I am starting to believe that the weather plays, year after year a major role in this challenge. After all nothing is more exiting and rewarding than the daily accomplishment, the carefully and well managed victory over natural elements ? For less experienced pilots they elevated themselves to another level of competence and experience surely gaining the confidence they needed from the start. It was for them the best reward they could receive out of this adventure. Of course coaching from experienced pilots and safety guidelines provided by the organisation kept anyone from running into trouble. The Cree and Diamond run challenge crews have acquired in a few hours’ practice the know how and confidence they would have acquired otherwise in a full year or more....

For the organisers, the 2005 edition has confirmed their convictions. This air Rally is destined to become one of the “not to be missed” aviation events in North America. More than a show, a race, an expedition, an organised trip, it gives pilots the opportunity to discover new territories,

improve their skills, have fun and build strong relations with other pilots. Here (Air Rally) we FLY!  
We learn, we build friendships regardless of borders or language differences!

**Our reward, is nothing less than participants satisfaction and enjoyment expressed after it is over**

*Robert from Virginia, retired US army pilot, 5000 flying time more or less !“I am writing to express my thanks for the best vacation I’ve ever had.....”*

*Don and Patricia, California, 2000 flying hours without GPS... We have been on two fabulous flying trips--one was ours in Alaska in 1998 and the other one was yours, the Air Rally of just a few weeks ago..... Would take years to adequately describe our thoughts about A.R. 2005. We have never met so many nice people in one spot ever before.! .....*

*Beatrice, New Jersey, around 200 hours, :What this Air rally did to the group is incredible!*

*Mark, Al, Gibb, François, Don, etc....* have also shared their great impressions with us. The pictures gathered by the group on the Internet witness great and intense moments shared by all. See (picture link on website)

The Air Rally organisation has benefited from the collaboration of dedicated experienced and knowledgeable pilots: Alan Matson and Mark Helseth, Volunteers of the Minnesota Civil Air Patrol, Raoul Proteau, President of SERABEC (Search and rescue Quebec) Real Gagné and Benoit Bourque

engineers, kindly delegated and sponsored by Pratt & Whitney of Canada to help the organisation since 2002. Not to forget Robert Dewar, Director of Engineering Bombardier Aerospace who since 2003 receives the support of Pierre Beaudoin, CEO for the dispatch of Bombardier's corporate DASH8 as a back up to VFR participants to reach remote territories safely; Camil Dumont, President of the Organising committee who initiated the Air Rally in 2001 and dedicates his time and plane to the Air Rally every year since.

This event is also unique as it calls for the involvement of many partners working individually all year round to prepare our visit. Those are nothing less than local Economic development officials, Airport managers and staff, local Tourism organisations, destinations' Municipal employees, NAV Canada personnel, Air Cadets, all investing time and effort to insure that the Air Rally is a total success.

**The City of Longueuil, Economic Development and St-Hubert Airport** development teams have greatly contributed to the success of this 2005 edition: From a TV show realized for the air Rally early spring at the Airport and aired on the popular TVA channel on the "Sucré Salé" show to the organisation of a major Press conference to which Cree Chief partners were invited, to the great reception organised for the participants to inaugurate the 5th edition and to finally handle the departure of 23 planes from the St-Hubert airport on the 12th of August. It was a lot of work ! and the Air Rally is proud to have been selected to contribute to the International promotion of this airport with a promising future. Thank you very much Longueuil !

**Waskaganish, James Bay, QC** first Cree community on the Itinerary and a wonderful revelation to us ! This territory is enhanced by beautiful rivers, the Rupert and Broadback Rivers, very valued by kayak adepts of which Chief Weistche and his family are part. We were invited to take part in the celebrations organised to honour the "Canoe Brigade": brave elders and youngsters of the community who for one month travelled on the ancestors' path by canoe, descending the famous Rupert River from Mistissini to Waskaganish. It is in Tepees by the rapids of "Smoky Hill" a legendary site, that we spent the night on a mattress made out of pine branches, tucked in our sleeping bags nice and warm around the fire ! Thank you so much Chief Weistche, Sherry and Raymond for letting us share these magic moments with you. This first experience disconnected us already from the real world but it was just the beginning !

**Whapmagoostui-Kuujuarapik, Hudson Bay, QC** was the next destination and the most remote of the challenge. There we experienced the true North ! In this territory where the forest meets the Tundra, we were welcomed in the heart of the smallest Cree community who shares the territory with the Inuit : The only territory without road access! It displays a wild landscape without limits, deprived of any sign of human disruption. The people of the community, just like the other communities, shared with us the product of their fishing, hunting and especially the delicious urchins captured especially for us the previous day in the cold waters of the Bay. We had to measure ourselves during a "hatchet throwing contest" Alan, a former US Military officer was the only one to succeed !

VFR pilots cheated a little ... to reach safely this quasi arctic zone, they flew in the safety of the DASH8 supplied by Bombardier aerospace ! Congratulations to the IFR pilots who reached the destination with such difficult IFR conditions ! Chief Masty, thank you so much for offering us this wonderful experience! and Mr. Pierre Beaudoin, CEO Bombardier Aerospace, thank you for making it possible for all of us without exception!

**Radisson (Grande Rivière), James Bay QC** always so nice to see you Mr. Lavigne, Mayor of Radisson ! It was a great pleasure to discover (or rediscover for 2003 participants) the greatest

underground dam in the world. Thank you to Hydro Quebec, Grande Rivière sector, for letting us use the engineers very comfortable quarters. The evening was very pleasant around a great supper at the Auberge Radisson.

**Wemindji, QC** last Cree community of the challenge but far from being the least ! What a welcoming party! The population was at the rendez-vous. I must say that the weather helped getting us there early enough to enjoy all of the activities prepared for us. In a huge tepee, around a great friendly fire, participants sat down and relaxed sharing thoughts and exchanging views with our hosts, eating food cooked before their eyes and according to tradition by the master cooks of the community: roasted wild goose, beaver, fish of all kinds, homemade bread cooked on wooden sticks placed around the fire. Needless to say that this feast was greatly appreciated as much for its cooking qualities than for the relaxing and friendly atmosphere accompanying the feast.

Chief Mark showed us with pride the great improvements he and his Council made for the people of the community: The luxurious Sports Center to initiate the young to sports and keep them healthy, the new incinerator installation to keep the community clean of human generated trash, the housing project with paved streets and sidewalks.

Some of us had the great privilege to fly on board a DeHavilland Otter flown by THE BEST and legendary Quebec Bush pilot : **Jean-Marie Arsenault**: destination, an island close to the coast in the James Bay. They flew over so close to almost touch the polar bears. Those animals were left behind by drifting ice banks all summer long. Lets hope they will get the ice back this winter !

In the evening, we danced the traditional dances in the company of the “**Wemindji dance group**” of which the Chief himself was a part. Chief Mark ! thank you so much ! We know you are retiring in September and leaving for the bush! You have the best of all worlds ! Enjoy your well deserved rest ! Thank you Mark Wadden, you are to stay to carry-on the good work !

**Mont-Laurier.** What a shame ! Stuck in Matagami by bad weather conditions, certain VFR pilots were not able to discover this great destination. Mr. Mayor was waiting for us with a cocktail you would have enjoyed. You missed meeting the great pilots of Mont-Laurier and especially Mr. Perrier who made our stop possible and gathered all the help and support he could get. There we enjoyed the luxury of *The Windigo resort* located in the beautiful reservoir Baskatong. After a true gourmet meal and quality wine served in the beautiful and cosy LOG cabin style restaurant, we retired in nonetheless classy and luxurious log homes. Thank you Mr. Perrier, thank you Mr. Mayor and Windigo administrators and of course Mont-Laurier pilots don't forget your rendez-vous with the 2006 Air Rally !

**Sherbrooke,** always ready to receive us with great ceremony! Cree challenge and Maritime Challenge pilots met during a reception organised at the Golf Club of Sherbrooke. There we got serious with a lesson on safety and survival professionally prepared by Captain Matson “Alan”

Thank you so much to Sherbrooke team and more particularly to Mr. Alain Deschâtelets, Mr Boisvert and Anne-Marie Breault for this wonderful evening marking a change of crews and a new beginning for this Diamond Run Challenge.

**Greenville Maine, USA.** This stop marked the first incursion of the Air Rally into the United States of America ! A VIP reception ! Would you believe that to avoid us some trouble and cut on time the Sheriff arranged custom clearance for the Air Rally participants right there in Greenville?!

Greenville was a wonderful experience! Starting with a canoe race on the Moosehead Lake, followed by a supper cruise on the historical steamship boat, the Katahdin and to finish on top of the mountain overlooking the Moosehead Lake in the “Squaw Mountain Resort” to enjoy a beautiful sunset. This resort usually reserved to the skiers in the winter opened its doors for us.

Thank you so much Mr. Denis Welsch, President of the Moosehead Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Return to Canada via **Fredericton, New Brunswick**. Second destination of the Maritime challenge was an excuse to visit again our 2004 partners, Dave Gamblin and Heather MacClean. Helped by volunteer pilots, they offered us a very warm welcome reception. After a relaxing cruise we all met at the airport for an excellent buffet and barbecue at the airport where thanks to Al's initiative and his great flying capabilities and knowledge, our pilots received flying formation guidelines to produce beautiful pictures of one another in the air ! What more do pilots want ! BEER? WINE? Thank you so much Fredericton !

**Matane, Gaspésie, QC** : What a program ! Visit of the diamond cutting and polishing installations recently opened by our great sponsor Diarough Canada, under the lead of a wonderful and dynamic lady, Anne Dupéré. We were given the authorization to look around the installations, see the diamonds and the cutters and polishers in action (they came to work on a Saturday especially for us !) No one else will experience this in the future ! Sorry !.....

In the center of the City of Matane we discovered the salmon pond and tasted the famous Matane shrimps the smoked salmon and muscles. A very special evening was organised in a gourmet restaurant by the water (St-Lawrence bay) in the company of the Mayor of Matane (a lady) and of course our dear Anne. Anne Dupéré is the director of Diarough Canada a famous diamond distributor. Diarough offered a beautiful Canadian diamond to the winner of the Diamond Run Challenge. Anne you are a great ambassador to the Canadian diamond! Thank you so much for this great experience.

**St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, QC**, last destination. We celebrated the finals in the middle of 125 Hot Air balloons. Unfortunately our VFR pilots stayed behind still enjoying the beautiful Gaspésie coast.

IFR pilots arrived on time to enjoy a swarm of multicoloured Air balloons flying in the St-Jean-Sur-Richelieu skies. This is how we beautifully ended this unforgettable adventure. The ambiance of the Hot Air Balloon festivities was appropriate for handing the rewards to the winners and we are very grateful to the organisers of the festival for letting us celebrate in the heart of this major International event. Thank you Mr. Larivière, Director of Economic Development and Mr. Gilles Dolbec, Mayor of St-Jean sur Richelieu.

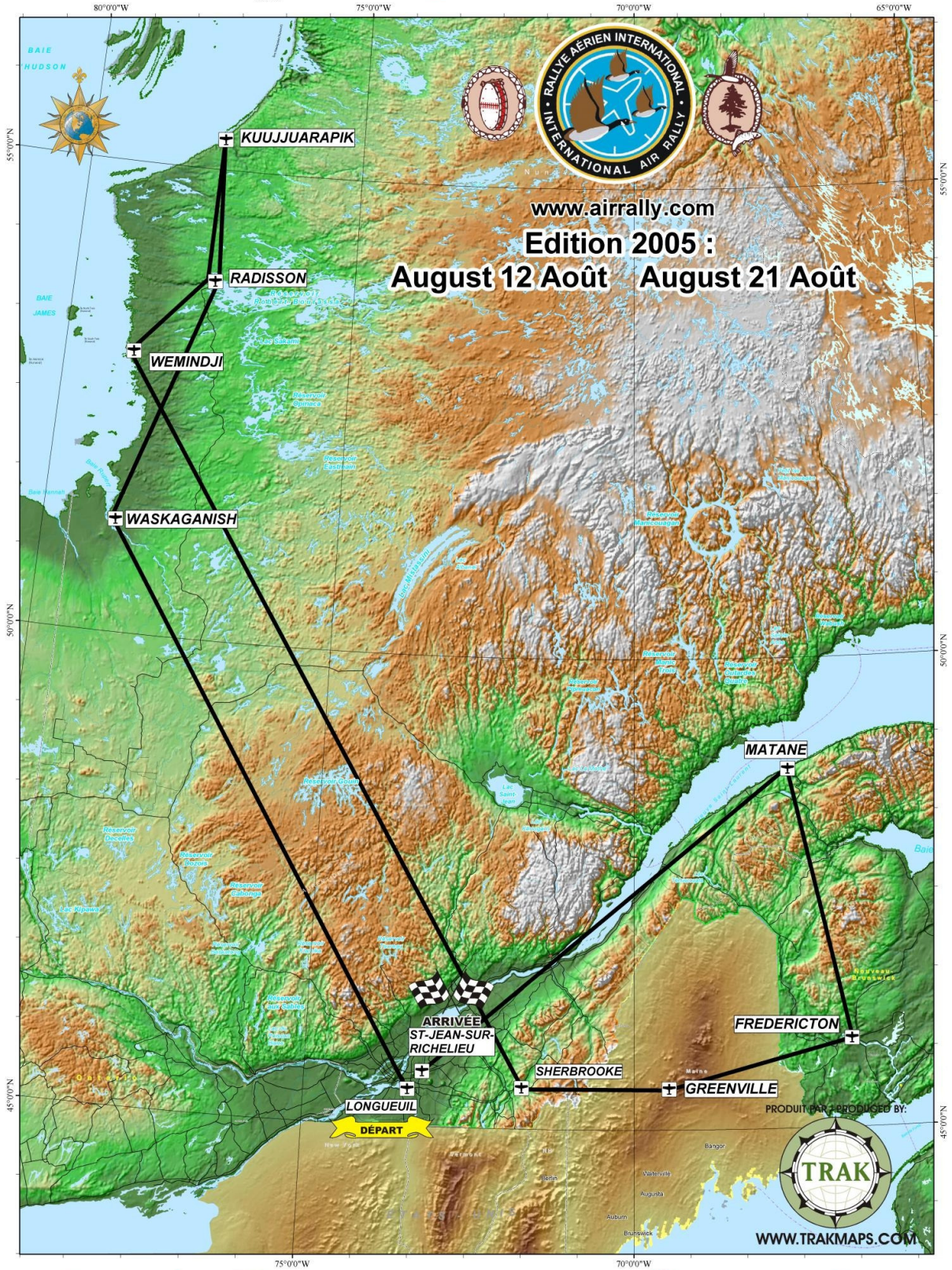
We will never thank enough our faithful partners ***Bombardier Aerospace, Pratt&Whitney, Joslyn Canada, Aeropro***, who contribute every year to the growth of this event and the promotion of our great destinations.

Our gratitude goes also to the partners who have contributed financially to the production of a one hour documentary for the national TV popular sports channel : TSN due to air this fall:

***The Cree Nations of Waskaganish, Wemindji and Whapmagoostui, Bay James Tourism***

***CLD of Mont-Laurier, Tourism Sherbrooke, the City of St-Jean-sur-Richelieu and***

*Diarough Canada., Super8 Motel, Grondair*



chain.

