



2022 US Team National Pilot Invitation



February 20, 2022

Dear Competitor:

US Team Nationals Mission and Background

Promoting competition in the US is the mission of the HACD. The US Team National Championship was first initiated in 1995 and is integral to this mission as it encourages our best competitive pilots to team up with and fly alongside lesser experienced competitors or those completely new to competition. We encourage pilots of all skill sets to participate. It is my goal as Director to encourage new participation, provide nurturing training during the event and assist any new competitor to find an experienced mentor to provide important counseling throughout the event.

Several learning and skill development opportunities exist throughout the Championship including the following:

- A full practice team competition flight on Monday designed as a learning experience including post flight debriefings with an open forum led by event staff.
- Daily post-flight debriefings led by a top competitor. These sessions will include an analysis of the tasks and the team decisions made in the planning and execution phase of that day's flight.

2022 Goal #1 – Team Diversity

While this is a National Championship event, other than declaring a Championship Team, our primary goal for 2022 and beyond is to stimulate growth and encourage mentorship in competitive ballooning. To this end the application review process will be considering, among other criteria, teams whose members meet not only the technical requirements but also the spirit of team composition. **All pilots, regardless of ranking, with an interest in participating in this unique event are encouraged to assemble a team and submit your registration.**

Included in this invitation is a list of pilots we have ranked as “A” and “B” for purposes of allowable team composition. The following are the only permitted team compositions:

- A, B, C
- B, B, C
- B, C, C
- A, C, C
- C, C, C

Invitation and Application Process

The US Team National Hot Air Balloon Championship is again being hosted by the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission and will be held in Shreveport, Louisiana June 20-25, 2022. In an approach similar to the US Nationals, priority will be given to the ranking order of the US National Eligibility list. The organizer has agreed to add two more teams to the field for a total of twelve (12) eligible teams, 36 pilots, for 2022.

Team entry priority is determined by the highest position of any team member in the 2022 Nationals Invitation list – and does not have to be the A-ranked player nor the Team's Captain. Registrants must be a current BFA and HACD member.

The following criteria were used to create a starting point in the ranking of pilots for allowable team composition. Officials then made the final ranking decision based on a number of additional subjective factors including, but not limited to, currency of top-level experience, World Team background and performance at 2021 US Team Nationals.

All registration must be submitted through Cognito Forms by April 1, 2022



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“A” ranked pilots were generally determined from those exhibiting the following criteria:

- Any past US National Champion of the past ten years
- Any pilot finishing in the top fifteen of the US National Championship two or more times in the last five active years (2016-2021) years. 2020 is not used due to cancellation of US Nationals.

“B” ranked pilots are those meeting the following criteria.

- Any past US Women or Junior Champion
- Any pilot finishing in the top fifteen of the US Nationals once in the past 5 years
- Any pilot having participated in a US Nationals or World Championship two (2) or more times in the past five (5) years (2016-2021) not classified as an “A” AND have finished in the top 50 of the NEL two or more times in the same five-year period.
- Any pilot finishing in the top fifteen (15) of the BFA National Eligibility System in three (3) of the last five (5) years.

Based on the criteria discussed above the following are the A and B-ranked pilots for US Team registration purposes that we have determined at this time. Due to possible oversight, there could be future additions to either list.

A-Ranked Pilots
Armstrong, Scott
Baird, Andy
Craig, Brad
Donner, Chase
Donner, Nick
Gilles, Jeff
Heartsill, Joe
Heartsill, Rhett
Isley, Todd
Nels, Al
Nels, Andrew
Petrehn, John
Petrehn, Paul
Rubin, Jeremy
Wright, Jonathan
Zvada, Joe

B-Ranked Pilots
Baker, Bill
Bloom, Cory
Bloom, Brandon
Bousselot, Matt
Clair, Leroy
Cliver, Bubba
Cliver, Chris
Cloyd, Patrick
Egerton, Drew
Fenster, Matt
Foelske, Aaron
Heartsill, Lucas
Heavin, Gary
Jones, Jason
Jones, Steve
Liberti, Daniel
Mitchell, Steve
Pestun, Jeff
Raya, Shawn
Sabin, Richard
White, Cheri
Wilkinson, Justin
Wilkinson, Steve
Wood, Bruce

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2022 US Team National Hot Air Balloon Championship
Shreveport, Louisiana
June 20– 25, 2022

Team Composition and Registration

All BFA/HACD members are eligible to apply. Pilot registration fees are \$200 for sport balloons and \$1,500 for commercial balloons. Registration fees payable to the BFA are due by February 28, 2022.

Pilots will be required to register and submit needed documents using Cognito forms. Please use this link to access the registration and submit online: [2022 US Team National Hot Air Balloon Championship Application \(cognitoforms.com\)](https://cognitoforms.com/2022-US-Team-National-Hot-Air-Balloon-Championship-Application)

Individuals may register without a team and we will attempt to place them with a team should there be openings available based on their ranking. All applicants will be screened for an appropriate level of experience and other pertinent factors for an event of this nature.

BalloonLive App and Flytec Loggers

The Balloon Live App will be utilized in concert with the Balloon Live Sensor. Event details, results and the ONB will be housed on Watchmefly.net.

Pilots will be required to sign up and create a free profile on [WatchMeFly](https://watchmefly.net). This site was created to work in conjunction with the FAI Balloon Live App and Balloon Live Sensor and provide valuable resources for competitors, event officials and the viewing public.

The [FAI Balloon Live App](https://watchmefly.net) is available for purchase in both the Android and IOS App Stores. It can be used on mobile phones or tablets with data or Wi-Fi only. The Balloon Live Sensor is specifically designed to provide accurate, reliable and consistent track and altitude data for all participating competitors. It provides Bluetooth connectivity to both your flight computer and FAI Balloon Live App device (cell phone or tablet). This allows you to navigate by the actual track and altitude data used for scoring.

Here are some links you can use to learn more about the new technology.

<https://vimeo.com/354339178>

<http://balloonlive.org/about-balloon-live/>

<http://balloonlive.org/how-to-use/>

Prize Fund and Benefits

A prize fund of \$10,000 cash is guaranteed plus a \$150 travel stipend to be paid in the form of cash or a gas card bringing the prize fund to a total of \$15,400.

The competitive event officially starts with on-site pilot registration and the mandatory General Briefing on Monday, June 20. The last competitive flight is scheduled for Saturday morning. The closing ceremony and awards banquet will be Saturday afternoon preceding the mandatory Saturday evening glow. The \$150 gift cards will be distributed to pilots present at the mandatory glow.

Airspace

The majority of competitive flight operations are within the Class C airspace of Shreveport Regional Airport (SHV) and Barksdale Air Force Base. Both facilities are fully cooperating with our event and operations personnel to ensure a safe event. In this regard, **you are required to carry an operating aircraft radio.**

Selection and Participation

The United States Team Championship is open to all BFA/HACD member pilots who are in good standing. Teams are encouraged to recruit "C" pilots who are new to or have less experience with high-level competition. Acceptance preference is based on criteria previously explained should applications exceed the available slots.

Pilots registering are expected to remain and participate for the entire duration of the event as required by the HACD Code of Conduct.

Insurance

The Organizer and the BFA/HACD require that each participating pilot name the sponsoring organization, BFA/HACD, venues and others directly involved in the organization and sponsoring of this event as additionally insured on their balloon insurance policy. Both the event and the BFA/HACD have event insurance policies in place providing non-owned aircraft and general liability coverage. Named additionally insureds will include Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist

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2022 US Team National Hot Air Balloon Championship
Shreveport, Louisiana
June 20– 25, 2022

Bureau, Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission, its officers, directors and employees, and the Cities of Bossier City and Shreveport and Bossier and Caddo Parishes, and the BFA/HACD.

Tentative Championship Schedule

June 19 Early on-site pilot registration, Marriott Courtyard
Welcome party at Blue Bird Airport
June 20 Practice flight
Complimentary room check in, six nights provided
Pilot registration and General Briefing, Southwood High School
Opening ceremonies, Margaritaville Casino
June 21-25 Competitive flights
June 24-25 Mandatory evening glows, Brookshire Grocery Arena
June 25 Closing ceremony and awards banquet
June 26 Pilot checkout
Optional glow at DeSoto Parish Festival with extra night comp room and \$175 gift card

Deadlines and Next Steps

The deadline for pilots to register is April 1, 2022. Keep in mind all pilots are eligible to apply and register a team. Should the number of team applications exceed the allotted twelve slots, priority will be based on the 2022 US National Eligibility List which can be found on the BFA web site.

On behalf of the BFA/HACD and Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission, we look forward to seeing you in Shreveport, Louisiana this summer.

Sincerely,

Maury Sullivan
Championship Director

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