

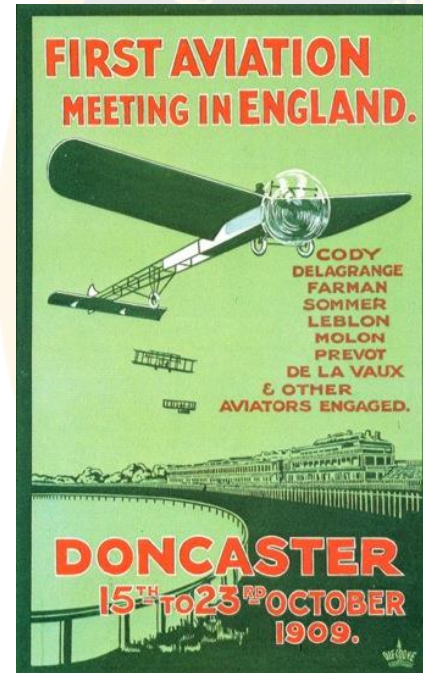
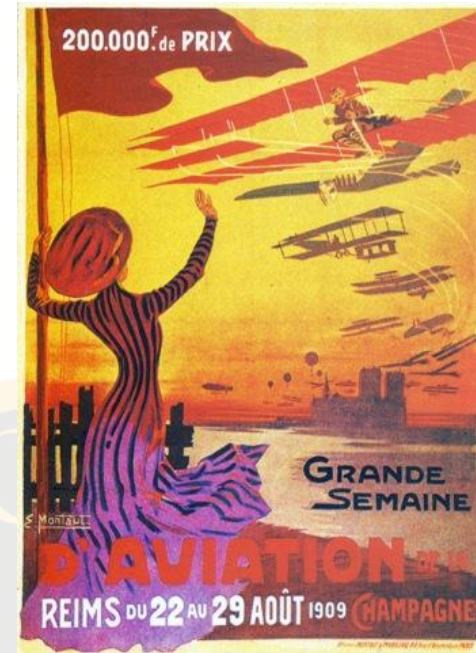
The First Air Races



First Air Races

Air racing began almost as soon as the aeroplane was invented.

- World's first air race at Reims 22nd – 29th August 1909
- UK's first air race at Doncaster Race Course 15th – 23rd October 1909
- RAC holds Air Races at Blackpool at the same time
 - Lots of controversy!



Reims Air Race

Organised by the Aero Club of France (AcF) with help from the Automobile Association and town of Reims. This was a huge international meeting of aviation, with lots of prize money and sponsors. It attracted the top pilots, celebrities and politicians.

Louis Blériot	Blériot XI/XII/XIII
Louis Bréguet	Bréguet biplane
Etienne Bunau-Varilla	Voisin
George Cockburn	Farman III
Glen Curtiss	Curtiss-Herring biplane
Léon Delagrangé	Blériot XI
Robert Esnault-Pelterie	R.E.P. 2/2bis
Henry Farman	Farman III
M. Fernandez	Wright Type A
André Fournier	Voisin
Jean Gobron	Voisin
Comte de Lambert	Wright Type A
Henri Rougier	Voisin
M. de Rue	Voisin
M. Sanchez-Beza	Wright Type A
L. Schreck	Wright Type A
Société Antoinette	Antoinette IV/VII/VIII
Société Ariel	Wright Type A
Roger Sommer	Farman III
Paul Tissandier	Wright Type A
Gabriel Voisin	Voisin



Louis Blériot & Glenn Curtiss



Some of the Pilots L → R
unknown, Roger Sommer, Louis Paulhan, Louis Breguet,
Jean Gobron, unknown (René Demanest?)

Reims Air Race

The image is a composite. The left side features a detailed historical map of the Reims Air Race route. The map shows a network of roads and railways, with the race route highlighted by a dashed line with stars. Key locations marked on the map include Courcy, Reims, la Neuville, St. Brice, Tinguieux, and Dormans. The map also shows the Marne river and various landmarks like the 'Pont de la Vierge' and 'Pont de la Vierge'. The right side of the image is a black and white photograph showing an early aircraft, possibly a biplane, in flight over a flat, open field. A large crowd of spectators is gathered on the ground, watching the race. In the foreground, there are some early 20th-century automobiles and a large box or structure. The overall scene captures the excitement and scale of the event.

120,000



120,000 people attended on the last day

Reims Race - Results

Race		Prize
Grand Prix de la Champagne et de la Ville de Reims	Longest non-stop flight	100,000 francs - 50,000 to the winner
Coupe d'Aviation Gordon-Bennett	Highest speed over two laps	25,000 francs plus a trophy worth 12,500 fra
Prix de la Vitesse	Highest speed over three 10 km laps	20,000 francs - 10,000 to the winner
Prix du Tour de Piste	Highest speed over one lap	10,000 francs- 7,000 to the winner
Prix des Passagers	Highest speed over 10 km with the highest number of passengers	10,000 francs to the winner
Prix de l'Altitude	Highest altitude reached	10,000 francs to the winner
Prix des Aéronats	Highest speed of a dirigible over five laps	10,000 francs to the winner

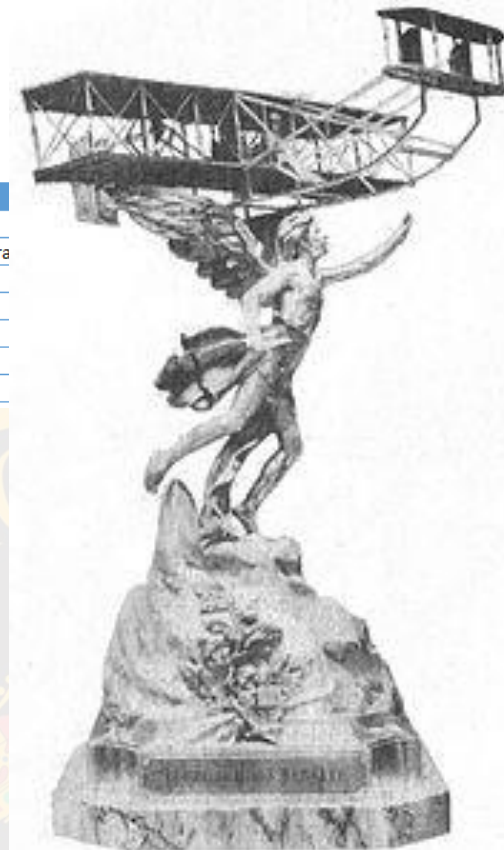
Total Prize money won

60k francs ~ \$350k

Pilot	Plane	Prize
1 Henry Farman	Farman	60,000 francs
2 Hubert Latham	Antoinette	45,000 francs
3 Glenn Curtiss	Curtiss	38,000 francs
4 Louis Paulhan	Voisin	10,000 francs
5 Paul Tissandier	Wright	8,000 francs
6 Louis Blériot	Blériot	7,000 francs
7 Charles de Lambert	Wright	5,000 francs
8 Eugène Lefebvre	Wright	2,000 francs
9 Étienne Bunau-Varilla	Voisin	2,000 francs
10 Henri Rougier	Voisin	1,000 francs
11 Roger Sommer	Farman	500 francs

Grand Prix de la Champagne

Pilot	Plane	Distance
1 Henri Farman	Farman #30	180 km



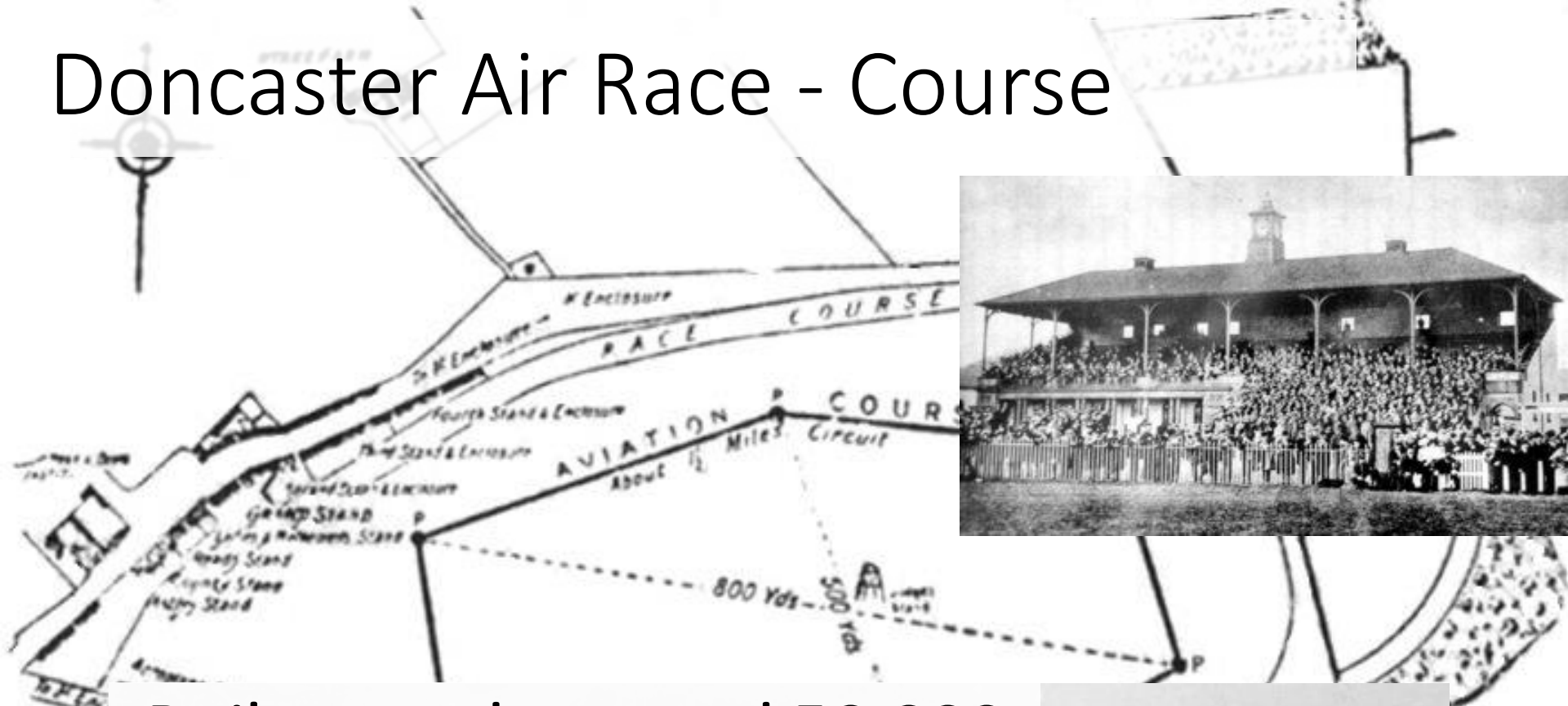
First Gordon-Bennet Trophy Race

Pilot	Plane	Time
1 Glenn Curtiss	Curtiss #8	15m 30 s

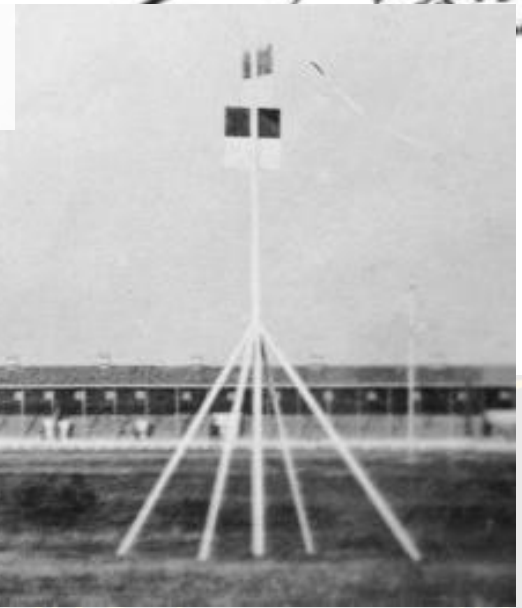
20 km speed race, 2 laps of a 10 km course



Doncaster Air Race - Course



Daily crowds topped 50,000



& RAIL

Doncaster Air Race - Pilots

1. Léon Molon
2. Léon Delagrange
3. Hubert Le Blon
4. Samuel Cody
5. Captain Lovelace
6. Roger Sommer
7. Frantz Reichel
8. Georges PrévotEAU
9. Louis Schreck
10. Walter Windham
11. Georges Saunier



Doncaster Races - Results

Doncaster Cup – aggregate distance

	Pilot	Plane	Distance
1	Roger Sommer	Farman	219.127 km
2	Hubert Le Blon	Blériot XI	64.360 km
3	Léon Delagrang	Blériot XI	47.398 km
4	Léon Molon	Blériot XI	28.753 km

Doncaster Tradesmen's Cup – Fastest lap

80kph = 50mph = 43 knots

	Pilot	Plane	Time
1	Léon Delagrang	Blériot XI	1m 47s

The speed, 80.3 km/h, exceeded the official world record

Other trophies (9 in total)

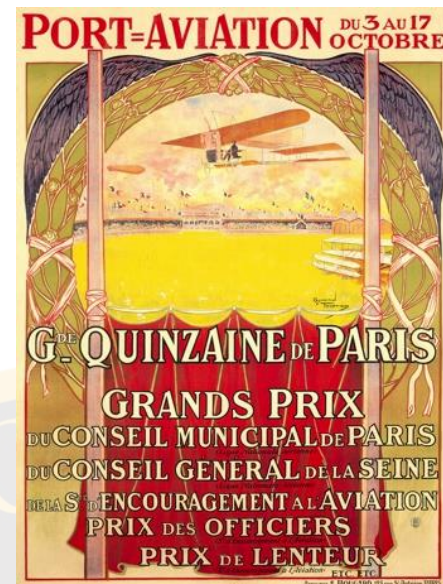
Race		Pilot	Plane	Prize
Chairmans Cup	Best Time over 5 laps Biplane	Roger Sommer	Farman	
Doncaster Town Cup	Best Time over 5 laps	Léon Delagrang	Blériot XI	£122
Doncaster Town Cup	Best Time over 5 laps - 2nd	Roger Sommer	Farman	£33
Bradford Cup	Best Time over 10 laps	Hubert Le Blon	Blériot XI	£40



First Air Races

1909

- **The inauguration of Port-Aviation**, Juvisy, France, 23 May 1909
- **Minor meetings at Port-Aviation**, Juvisy, France, May - July 1909
- **Concours d'Aviation de Douai**, Douai, France, 28 June - 18 July 1909
- **Semaine d'Aviation de Vichy**, Vichy, France, 18-25 July 1909
- **Grande Semaine d'Aviation de la Champagne**, Reims, France, 22-29 August 1909
- **Circuito Aereo Internazionale di Brescia**, Brescia, Italy, 8-20 September 1909
- **Quinzaine d'Aviation de Spa**, Spa, Belgium, 20 September - 2 October 1909
- **Berliner Flugwoche**, Berlin, Germany, 26 September - 3 October 1909
- **Internationale Flugwoche zu Frankfurt**, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 3-13 October 1909
- **Grande Quinzaine de Paris**, Port-Aviation (Juvisy), France, 7-20 October 1909
- **Doncaster Aviation Contest**, Doncaster, UK, 15-26 October 1909
- **Blackpool Aviation Week**, Blackpool, UK, 18-24 October 1909
- **Vliegweek van Antwerpen**, Antwerp, Belgium, 23 October - 2 November 1909



1910

- **Los Angeles Aviation Meet**, Los Angeles, USA, 10-20 January 1910
- **Grande Semaine d'Aviation d'Égypte**, Heliopolis, Egypt, 6-13 February 1910
- **Grande Semaine d'Aviation de Cannes**, Cannes, France, 27 March - 5 April 1910
- **Meeting d'Aviation de Biarritz**, Biarritz, France, 27 March - 3 April 1910
- **Semana de Aviación de Sevilla**, Seville, Spain, 1-10 April 1910
- **Meeting d'Aviation de Nice**, Nice, France, 15-24 April 1910
- **Semaine d'Aviation de Touraine**, Tours, France, 30 April - 5 May 1910
- **1a Grande Settimana d'Aviazione**, Palermo, Italy, 1-7 May 1910
- **Gran Senmana d'Aviació / Gran Semana de Aviación**, Barcelona, Spain, 1-8 May 1910
- **Semaine d'Aviation de Lyon**, Lyon, France, 7-15 May 1910
- **St. Petersburg Aviation Week**, Saint Petersburg, Russia, 8-15 May 1910
- **Internationale Flugwoche**, Berlin, Germany, 10-16 May 1910
- **Grosse Münchener Flugwoche**, Puchheim, Germany, 22-26 May 22 1910
- **Concorsi Aerei di Verona**, Verona, Italy, 22-29 May 1910



Air Race History

- Early 'Air Racing' drove the development of aviation
 - Competition between private individuals
 - Pioneers in aviation
 - Early aviation businesses
 - Sponsorship by wealthy individuals, businesses and countries
 - Gordon Bennet, De Meurthe, Jaques Schneider...
- Between WW1 & WW2 development continued
 - Initial competition between aviation businesses
 - Sponsorship by wealthy individuals & business continues
 - Becomes competition between Countries & Militaries
 - Specialised race planes that are faster than military!
- After WW2
 - Initially resurgent it fails and becomes a sport of private individuals
 - US gets it! In 1964 Reno Starts and National League
- Now in renaissance across Europe & America
 - RRRA, SARL, Reno, Red Bull, Air Race One
 - New sponsors & technology