



2026 Great Texas Balloon Race/Young Guns General Briefing Notes

Introduction of Staff:

Championship Director	Sam Parks (505-503-9091)
Deputy Director	Al Nels (937-902-9090)
Steward	Zerek Welz (505-948-1112)
Chief Safety Officer	Bruce Bussey (903-452-5411)
Assistant Safety Officer	Kelly Bussey (432-234-6738)
Chief Meteorologist	Randy Lefevre (505-730-3209)
Assistant Weather Officer	Robert Wise (704-880-8396)
Chief Scoring Officer	James Mitchell
Assistant Scoring Officer	Patty Cramer (740-502-0677)
Chief Measurer	Mark Dulweber (903-238-4484)
Assistant Measurer	Susie Dulweber
Landowner Relations	John Rich (903-720-3616)
Office Manager	Christy Bussey
FAA Liaison	Harry Steinfeldt
Propane Manager (Day)	Jaymie Hanes (903-985-0138)
Propane Manager (Night)	Katie Warren (903-331-9645)
GTBR Chair	Gai Bennett (903-720-5000)

Communications:

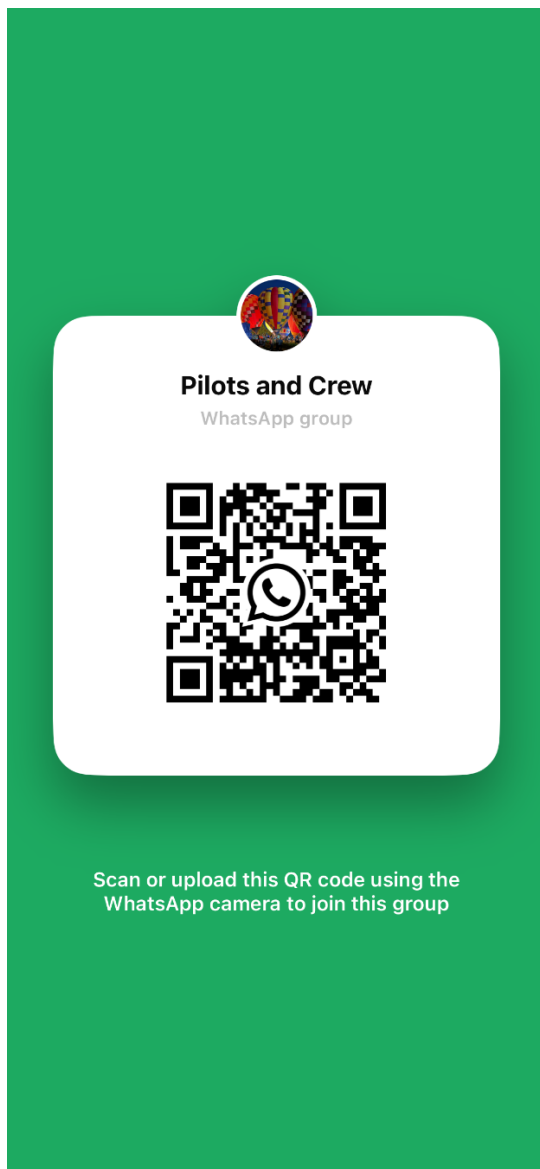
WhatsApp will be used to provide communications. Please make sure you have downloaded the free app to your phone prior to arriving in Longview. Your Crew Chief should also have the App.

Please make sure that Patty has your cell phone number as well as your Crew Chief's number.

All pilots and their crew chief need to have WhatsApp installed on their mobile device and create an account. Please be sure that your name is displayed when you send messages or sign your name to them so we know who you are. You can use the QR codes or links below to join each group and can share them with your crew.

PILOTS & CREW

The Event Director or his designee will use this group to distribute vital information about the upcoming flight, information about flight cancellations or task changes, and schedule reminders All pilots and their team leaders must monitor this group during the entire event.



<https://chat.whatsapp.com/lp92yItvH3K4w3XQmuWt8p>

WEATHER INFORMATION

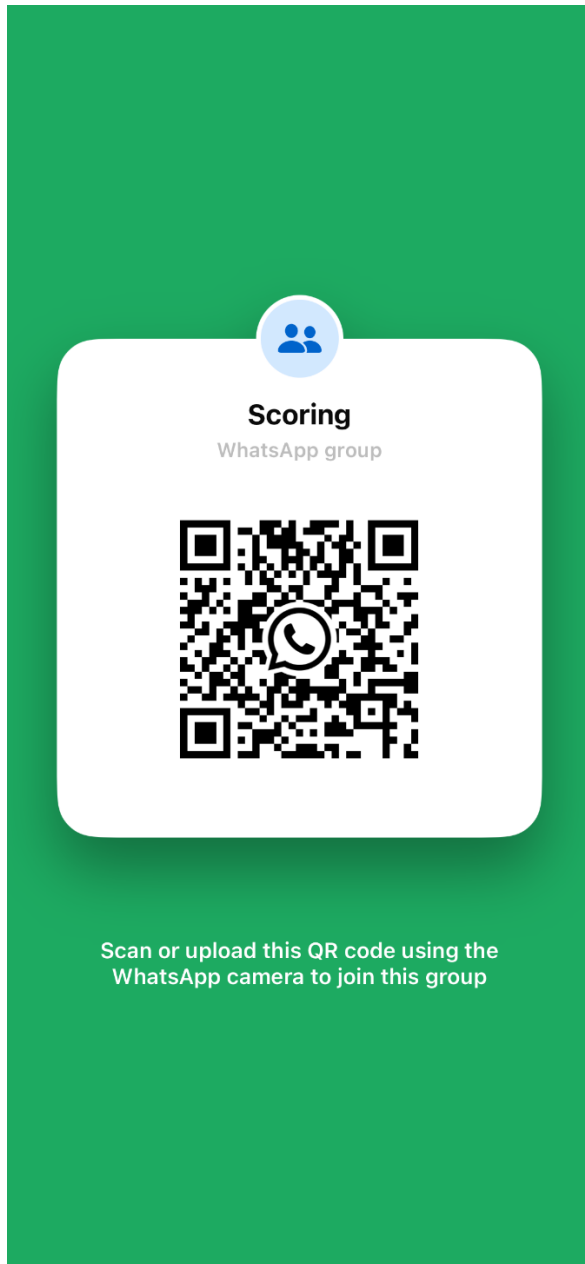
Theodolite readings and other weather information will be sent to this group.



<https://chat.whatsapp.com/EruGts5y2NV0TM6HxklGk8>

SCORING

Announcements of the posting of scores, notices of complaints or protests, and other scoring information will be posted to this group.



<https://chat.whatsapp.com/E8VvKK8VUweE9BVZufzEil>

While flying, monitor the aircraft frequency 123.450 for additional communications.

Electronic Notice Board will be on **WatchMeFly**

A PZ map will also be posted in the lobby of the Maude Cobb Convention and Event Center to identify any changes to the Competition Map.

Operations:

Pibal readings will be shared through WhatsApp, starting at 4:45 am.

Great Texas Balloon Race and Young Gun Pilots will fly the same tasks for the respective championships. Interference by a Young Gun or a GTBR pilot against someone of a different group, will not be grounds for complaint or protest.

Each pilot shall submit a flight report form after each flight and before going to propane. All unused markers and rings will be turned in at Maude Cobb after each flight.

Respect, civility and grace will be provided to each competitor and their crew, please respond in kind. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.

WIFI in the Maude Cobb Convention and Event Center is open, no password is needed.

Pilots with trailers will need to remove their basket before it can be refueled. No standing in the basket during refueling.

Propane refueling will close at **11:00 am** Friday and Saturday Mornings and **10:00 am** Sunday morning. If you see that you are running late, please contact the Propane Manager. Go to propane as soon as you can so the Propane Company and the Fire Department can complete their service and go home.

Doors to the Pilot Briefing area will open at **5:15 am** and we hope to have a 15-minute quiet period before roll-call.

If you have a question about a marker measurement, contact Mark Dulweber.

Per the HACD rules, the Jury President will be James Mitchell. Additional jury members will be drawn prior to the first championship flight.

The Task Data Sheet will be published to WatchMeFly before the pilot briefing starts.

Landowner Relations:

John Rich and his team of landowner Relations representatives are here to assist you; in the event you have an issue while flying in Longview. Keep John's cell number on you at all times.

Be cautious of landing at Pump Jacks and Well Heads. If you land behind a locked gate, call John and give him as much information as your surroundings can provide.

I-20 is the only red road; it has a 250' AGL (650' MSL) dome over the road.

The following red PZ's have a 1,400' MSL altitude:

#2201

#4297

#4396

All other red PZ's have an altitude of 900' MSL

The map is considered "flat" at 400' MSL

Navigation & Competition

Make sure you have the latest version of the Balloon Live App.

Latest App Version: **2035**

Latest BLS Firmware Version: **4.19**

Please record a flight for testing purposes

Update flight during the pilot briefing

Connect the BLS **before** the start of the flight recording.

Disconnect BLS **after** flight recording has been stopped.

Do not interrupt connection during your flight!

After landing, stop flight and upload track.

For hard target locations provided on the Task Data Sheet, staff will provide the 4-digit identifier from the preapproved list, along with the 4 x 4 number. If it is a new hard target location, you will receive the coordinates in the 4 x 4 format.

If a target has been moved slightly from its original location the TDS will indicate that the new target is NEAR TO_____, and provide the old target number for reference.

The Great Texas Balloon Race is going back to the familiar “RING TOSS” competition, where pilots will be provided a ring that can be placed on a pole for extra prize money.

2026 GREAT TEXAS BALLOON RACE

PRIZE MONEY

Total Purse - \$48,000.00

1st Place	\$7,500.00
2nd Place	\$3,750.00
3rd Place	\$2,500.00
4th Place	\$2,000.00
5th Place	\$1,500.00
6th Place	\$1,400.00
7th Place	\$1,300.00
8th Place	\$1,200.00
9th Place	\$1,100.00
10th Place	\$1,000.00
11th thru 15th Place	\$700.00
16th thru 20th Place	\$600.00
21st thru 25th Place	\$550.00
26th thru 36th Place	\$500.00

Friday Ring the Pole - \$5,000.00

Saturday Ring the Pole - \$5,000.00

Texas State Champion-----Trophy

If no competitive flights are flown, each competition balloon pilot who attends all pilot briefings will receive \$200

2026 YOUNG GUNS PRIZE MONEY

Total Purse - \$7600.00

1st Place	\$2,500.00
2nd Place	\$2,000.00
3rd Place	\$1,000.00
4th Place	\$ 800.00
5th Place	\$ 700.00
6th Place	\$ 600.00

Ring the Pole - \$5,000 Friday and \$5,000 Saturday prize to include Young Guns and Great Texas Balloon Race pilots

Texas State Champion-----Trophy

If no competitive flights are flown, each competition balloon pilot who attends all pilot briefings will receive \$200

Questions:

If you have questions, feel free to contact me at sdparks1214@gmail.com or by cell phone (505-503-9091), or at our abbreviated General Briefing.