

8 September 2014

Aer Lingus wins the Budapest Airport Runway Run and is "The Fastest Airline in the World"

Aer Lingus literally raced down Budapest Airport's Runway 13R-31L on Saturday to take the title of "Fastest Airline in the World", beating other airlines, airports, and aviation enterprises from all over the world in the air transport industry's annual charity race, "bud:runway run" held in aid of a pool of child cancer charities, and other good causes.

In an astonishing 'double' Robert Murphy, an Aer Lingus Fleet Cost Manager, also led from the start, crossing the line in overall first place to take the prize of "Fastest Aviator", beating all other 609 competitors over the 12 km course – four lengths of the Budapest runway – in a blistering time of 41:26.

Aer Lingus, which entered two teams comprising a total of eight runners, was captained by Stephen Kavanagh, the airline's Chief Strategy and Planning Officer. Welcoming the team back to its Dublin HQ the Aer Lingus CEO, Christoph Mueller, said: "The triumph of Aer Lingus in Budapest epitomises the can-do spirit of the people who work for this great community-spirited airline and who are proud to represent us every day as we greet ever-growing numbers of customers to whom we are not only one of Europe's most punctual airlines, but also now the undisputed Fastest Airline in the World."

Teams and individual runners included seriously competitive entries fielded by Swiss International Airlines, Qatar Airways and Ryanair, which was represented by its new Chief Marketing Officer, Kenny Jacobs, who has driven the airline's recent corporate image makeover. Meanwhile the world's biggest low cost carrier – Southwest Airlines – was also commended with the unofficial "Air Miles Team Prize" for having travelled the most distance (from Dallas, Texas).

Krakow Airport from Poland won "Fastest Airport in the World" beating several other spirited hopefuls from across Europe, including a major challenge from Aéroports de Paris. 45 other aviation-related enterprises, ranging from manufacturers, banks, airport restaurants, ground handlers, and customs and border authorities also took part, with the global duty free shop operator Heinemann triumphing with a home win from its local subsidiary, Hungarian Duty Free, which operates the duty free shop concession at Budapest Airport (along with 61 other airports worldwide – having won the Sydney Airport concession only last week).

Although runway runs are popular community events in the USA, they are extremely hard to stage in Europe where runway capacity is seriously constrained at major airports. Therefore, in an exceptionally rare move, Budapest Airport closed a normally extremely active runway for just a few hours in order to stage "bud:runway run". The race was organised in association with the global sports leader, Nike, platinum sponsor Wizz Air, which has its home base at Budapest, and the specialist airline news service www.anna.aero. All finishers in "bud:runway run" were awarded the "Bron's Medal" in memory of the [anna.aero](http://www.anna.aero) publisher's 12-year-old daughter, Brontë "Bron" Hogan, who passed away in 2011 after a five-year battle with leukaemia. The bone marrow transplant charity, Anthony Nolan, which arranged two bone marrow swaps for Brontë, was one of the benefiting institutions.

Jost Lammers, Budapest Airport CEO, said: "We're thrilled to have had so many of our partners from the international airline and travel and tourism community coming to experience both this fantastic city, and our superb modern airport facilities. With competitors paying between €50-75 to take part – all of which goes to the benefiting charities – "bud:runway run" really has been a win-win-win for Budapest Airport, the partners, and the good causes."



Photo caption: 'Follow Me': Robert Murphy, an Aer Lingus Fleet Cost Manager, led from early on to take the Irish national airline to the 'double' – winning the team prize for the "Fastest Airline in the World" as well as taking overall first place and the prize of "Fastest Aviator", beating all other 609 competitors over the 12km course – four lengths of the Budapest runway – in a blistering time of 41:26.



Photo caption: Aer Lingus team captain, Stephen Kavanagh, Chief Strategy and Planning Officer (left), is presented the anna.aero-Budapest Airport Golden Cake trophy as the now-undisputed "Fastest Airline in the World".



FOTÓ: BUDAPEST AIRPORT - MÁNDI EMESE

Photo caption: Artur Staniszewski, Airline Relations Specialist, Krakow Airport hoists the award for the "Fastest Airport in the World" team prize.



FOTÓ: BUDAPEST AIRPORT - MÁNDI EMESE

Photo caption: Kam Jandu (left), Chief Commercial Officer, Budapest Airport presents the "Fastest Airport Concessionaire" prize to Fritz Janach, Managing Director, Hungarian Duty Free (a unit of Gebr. Heinemann which operates the airport's Duty Free & Travel Value Shop).

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Notes for Editors

- Budapest Airport Zrt. is the operator of Budapest Airport. It is owned by an international consortium of investors, led by the privately-owned German company AviAlliance, an independent airport manager holding a 49.67% stake, together with Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (18.17%), Malton Investment Pte Ltd. (18.17%), Aero Investment S.á.r.l. (10%) and KfW IPEX-Bank GmbH (4%).
- Budapest Airport welcomed 8.5 million passengers in 2013, flying on the airport's services to 99 destinations across 34 countries.
- Budapest Airport's route development for 2014 include:
 - Already launched:
 - Norwegian thrice-weekly service to London Gatwick, 30 March
 - Air Serbia daily service to Belgrade, 30 March
 - Jet2.com twice-weekly service to Leeds Bradford, 3 April
 - transavia.com France thrice-weekly service to Paris Orly, 15 April
 - Wizz Air weekly service to Alicante, 14 June
 - Vueling thrice-weekly service to Barcelona, 21 June
 - Pegasus four times weekly service to Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen, 16 July
 - To launch:
 - Wizz Air twice-weekly service to Kutaisi, starting 30 September
 - Emirates Airlines daily service to Dubai, starting W14

To find out more on Budapest Airport, visit www.bud.hu

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