



One of the reasons, maybe even the main reason, for having this competition was to learn. To have a go at competition ballooning for new pilots, to make practice-flights more competitive for the experienced pilots, to get to know the Balloon Live app. For officials to get to know the backend of WatchMeFLy, how to make a TaskDataSheet that works all over the world in terms of weather and scoring. For the developers of WatchMeFLy and the Balloon Live app to get more data and see if everything works as expected.

We've all learned a lot this first flight of Early Birds. Below are some learning moment of the past weeks (names have been removed to protect the not so innocent)

- Reading the tasksheet is a skill not to take lightly
 - Make your declarations and markerdrops in the right number but most important is to make them, the app can't help you with that. No declaration or marker means no result
 - Double check all distances, not complying means a distance penalty or even a no result
- Use your smartphone as if it was a real logger
 - Mount it on a pole for better GPS coverage and, to avoid spikes, not close to another device
 - Also this way you don't need to pick it up and accidentally drop your marker
 - A real logger doesn't answer phone-calls
- Fly these flights as if it was your Nationals or the Worlds
 - You'll get used to the "stress" of competition
 - After landing, pack up your balloon and go to debriefing first, not refueling. Meaning: send in your Flight Report Form a.s.a.p.
 - Check your results. Scorers are a special breed but still human and can make mistakes
- Technical
 - Read the "how-to" guides on www.balloonlive.org
 - Pay special attention to point 7 of recording a competition flight and make sure the number of "Unsent track points" is back to zero before you close the app

We can all learn from each other, please share your stories and questions in our Early Birds 2.0 Facebook-group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1133894956708952>). If you're not in this group yet, befriend Phillipe de Cock and he will add you to the group.