Boeing 767-300ER Completes Around-The-World Flight

A Boeing 767-300ER (extended range) airplane owned and operated by Lauda Air of Austria has completed an around-the-world flight, which began Aug. 30 in Frankfurt, Germany.

According to the airline, the airplane performed flawlessly during the five flights that took the passengers to five major cities on four continents. Airline President Niki Lauda was at the controls on every flight. Altogether, he piloted the Boeing 767 22,028 nautical miles in 46.1 hours, besting the 47-hour estimate provided by the airline prior to the flight.

The new jetliner used for this flight was delivered to Lauda Air on Aug. 9 and is the seventh Boeing 767 in the Lauda Air fleet. The airplane is the 759th 767 built by Boeing. The around-the-world flight was the first use of the airplane by the airline.

Niki Lauda, who is certified to fly the Boeing 767, 777 and 737, said he logs about 600 hours per year, or about three long-haul flights per month, flying his company's jetliners in normal service.

"Flying and running a company is easy to do. To understand this business you must be close to the core," Lauda said. "Buying 767s was a simple decision for us. It has the right combination of size and range, and it is doing a really good job."

The 767 also demonstrates solid revenue performance for airlines because it has the lowest operating and maintenance costs in its class, according to John Quinlivan, Boeing 767 vice president and general manager. Boeing was a sponsor of the around-the-world flight.

"All of us at Boeing would like to congratulate Niki and his passengers for completing this trip safely and showing the world what we already know - the 767 is the best value in the sky for medium range markets," Quinlivan said.

Passenger comfort is important to both Boeing and the airline. Lauda Air's newest 767 is configured for 244 passengers in two classes; however, only 130 passengers were on board for the around-the-world flight. One-hundred of the passengers were winners of a contest sponsored by Bild Zeitung, a German newspaper. Almost all of the contest winners were from Germany or Austria, and about half said they had never flown before.

The Boeing 767 has more passenger-preferred window or aisle seats than any other airplane. In both independent and proprietary surveys, 61 percent of passengers said they preferred the 767 over the A330. With Lauda Air's two-three-two abreast seating configuration in its economy class and a two-two-two abreast seating arrangement in business class, 87 percent of all passengers are either next to a window or an aisle.

Now that the airplane has returned to Germany, the Boeing 767 will be used on Lauda Air's scheduled flights and for charters. In addition to its 32 scheduled destinations, Lauda Air offers five weekly flights from Vienna to Bangkok on its 767s and four flights per week on its 777 to Sydney and Melbourne, Australia.

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