Archer Aviation

NYSE: ACHR

Bull case, bear case, quant rating — and the one name where the framework says calls, not puts

PRICE	**$5.11** at the 23 July 2026 close · 100 shares = **$511**
CAPITAL TIER	**Middle.** A sensible put contract needs about **$400**. Twice the smallest names, half of Infleqtion.
WHAT IT DOES	Builds electric aircraft that take off vertically like a helicopter and fly like a plane — for short city trips, and increasingly for defence.
QUANT RATING	**SIDEWAYS — the only non-Bear rating in this series, and the only one with a positive, validated backtest. See §4.**
TIMING SCORE	**+2 of +3 — price and momentum HIGH. This is covered-call territory, not put territory. See §3.**
KEY DATE	**Monday 10 August 2026 (expected)** — quarterly results, inside the 21 August expiry.
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READ THIS ONE DIFFERENTLY THE FRAMEWORK SAYS WAIT

Every other report in this series describes a stock beaten down on quiet volume — the classic put-selling setup. **Archer is the opposite, and that is exactly why it is worth reading.** It jumped 19.6% on 20 July on nearly four times normal volume after unveiling autonomous aircraft with Anduril, and it has held most of that gain. The score is **+2**. If you already own shares, this is when you sell covered calls. If you do not, the framework's answer is not "buy quickly" — it is **wait.** A discipline that only ever says buy is not a discipline.

Research and education, not investment advice. All figures are a snapshot taken after the 23 July 2026 close. Nothing here is a recommendation to buy or sell. See §9 for method, sources and full disclaimer.

1 · What the company actually does

1.1 In plain English

Archer builds **eVTOL** aircraft — electric vertical take-off and landing. Picture something between a helicopter and a small plane: a dozen electric rotors let it rise straight up from a rooftop or a small pad, then most of those rotors tilt forward and it flies like a fixed-wing aircraft.

Because the motors are electric, it is dramatically quieter than a helicopter and has far fewer moving parts to maintain. The commercial pitch is the short, painful journey: airport to city centre in ten minutes instead of an hour in traffic. Archer's aircraft is called **Midnight** and carries a pilot plus four passengers.

1.2 What changed this month — and it is significant

For years the eVTOL story has been about air taxis, which depend on regulators certifying an entirely new category of aircraft. In July 2026 Archer pivoted the narrative hard toward **defence**:

- **22–23 July:** Archer unveiled **Thunder** and **Halo**, a new generation of autonomous aircraft, developed **in partnership with Anduril** — the defence technology company — with **Marubeni Aerospace** named as a launch partner.
- The stock rose 8.4% on that news, having already jumped 19.6% on 20 July.
- Wall Street analysts have published a mean target implying roughly **94% upside**.

Why this matters: military procurement does not require the same civil passenger certification, budgets are larger and less price-sensitive, and a defence contract can arrive years before an air-taxi network is legal. It converts a "someday" business into a plausible "sooner" one — and Anduril's involvement is a meaningful third-party endorsement.

1.3 The company in numbers

TABLE 1 — ACHR AT A GLANCE, 23 JULY 2026

ITEM	VALUE	COMMENT
Share price	$5.11	100 shares = $511
Market capitalisation	$3.90B	The largest company in this series
Shares outstanding	762.9M	
Revenue, FY2025	**$0.3M**	Essentially pre-revenue
R&D, FY2025	$493.9M	Where the money goes — building an aircraft
Net loss, FY2025	**−$618.2M**	Up from −$536.8M
Free cash flow, FY2025	**−$537.9M**	Over half a billion a year
Cash & short-term investments	**$1.96B**	At 31 Dec 2025; $1.78B most recently
Total debt	$121.9M	Small relative to cash
Net cash	**$1.65B**	About $2.16 per share — 42% of the price
Cash runway	**~3.5 years**	At the current burn, and the burn is rising
Stock issued in FY2025	**$1.86B**	How the cash pile was built
Short interest	**108.5M shares · 16.4% of float**	Substantial
Beta	**3.19**	Moves roughly three times as much as the market
52-week range	$4.30 – $14.62	65% off the high; 19% above the low

2 · Reading this stock day to day

The setup, in the author's words

The institutions are **stormtroopers** — big, slow, formation-bound. You are a **Jedi**: quick, patient, answerable to nobody.

Trade what you know, not what you think. Right now what you *know* about Archer is that the price is high and the volume has been high. That is not the put-selling setup — that is the other side of the trade. **If you own the shares, this is when you get paid to sell calls against them. If you do not own them, this is when you wait.**

Chasing a stock three days after it jumped 20% is the stormtrooper move. Let it come to you.

Full version: Document 1, "Stormtroopers and Jedi."

2.1 The last twelve sessions, scored

TABLE 2 — ACHR DAILY TAPE WITH TIMING SCORE, 8–23 JULY 2026

DATE	CLOSE	VOLUME	20-DAY AVG	RSI	%B	REL. VOL	PRICE	MOM.	VOL.	SCORE
Wed 08 Jul	$4.84	19,252,200	$5.13	40.9	0.25	0.51	**−1**	0	**−1**	**−2**
Thu 09 Jul	$4.85	17,909,500	$5.10	41.1	0.28	0.50	**−1**	0	**−1**	**−2**
Fri 10 Jul	$4.73	23,816,900	$5.09	39.2	0.20	0.71	**−1**	0	**−1**	**−2**
Mon 13 Jul	$4.55	25,853,900	$5.05	36.5	0.10	0.81	**−1**	**−1**	0	**−2**
Tue 14 Jul	$4.85	28,415,900	$5.04	43.5	0.35	0.97	0	0	0	0
Wed 15 Jul	$4.78	23,050,800	$5.00	42.3	0.32	0.81	0	0	0	0
Thu 16 Jul	$4.49	25,503,200	$4.95	37.8	0.11	0.93	**−1**	0	0	−1
Fri 17 Jul	$4.44	25,382,200	$4.91	37.0	0.12	0.98	**−1**	**−1**	0	**−2**
Mon 20 Jul	**$5.31**	**99,253,700**	**$4.89**	**53.9**	**0.88**	**3.88**	**+1**	**+1**	**+1**	**+3**
Tue 21 Jul	$5.28	52,284,800	$4.89	53.4	0.87	**1.64**	**+1**	**+1**	**+1**	**+3**
Wed 22 Jul	$5.18	37,004,200	$4.88	51.6	0.79	1.09	**+1**	**+1**	0	**+2**
Thu 23 Jul	**$5.11**	**30,356,236**	**$4.88**	**50.3**	**0.72**	**0.85**	**+1**	**+1**	**0**	**+2**

Relative volume is against the trailing 10-session average. Momentum here scores +1 because MACD sits above its signal line while RSI is neutral at 50.3.

2.2 What this table teaches — the most valuable lesson in the series

1. **Monday 20 July is a textbook signal.** The stock rose **19.6%** on **99.25 million shares — 3.88× normal volume**. Every input flipped positive at once and the score hit **+3**, the maximum. That is what real conviction looks like: a large move *with* enormous participation behind it.
2. **Compare it to any day in the other reports.** In Documents 2, 3 and 4 the big moves came on *below-average* volume — drift, not conviction. Here the move came on four times normal volume. Same framework, opposite reading. That contrast is the clearest illustration of why volume is the tiebreaker.
3. **The gain has held.** Volume has faded from 99M to 52M to 37M to 30M while the price only eased from $5.31 to $5.11. Rallies that collapse give the move straight back; this one has not.
4. **And notice 14–15 July.** The score sat at exactly **0** — the "do nothing" zone. It would have been very tempting to act. Five sessions later the market told you which way it was going, for free. Patience was rewarded with information.

2.3 Your daily card for this stock

ACHR · sixty-second daily check

STEP	WHERE TO FIND IT	SELL PUTS IF	SELL CALLS IF
1. Volume	Yahoo quote page: "Volume" ÷ "Avg. Volume"	Under 0.8	Over 1.3
2. Price	Below the 20-day moving average?	Below ~$4.88	Above ~$4.88
3. Momentum	RSI(14)	Under 45	Over 60

Today the answer is +2 → covered calls if you own shares, and nothing if you don't.

Support **$4.30** (also the 52-week low), resistance **$5.60**. Watch for the price to fall back below $4.88 with volume under 0.8 — that is when this becomes a put-selling candidate again.

2.4 Today's technical picture

TABLE 3 — ACHR INDICATORS, 23 JULY 2026 CLOSE

INDICATOR	VALUE	READING
Close / previous close	$5.11 / $5.18	−1.35% — easing after the pop
After-hours bid / ask	**$5.12 / $5.13**	**A one-cent spread — the most liquid stock in this series**
Volume vs 3-month average	30,356,236 / 43,764,432	Relative volume 0.69 against 3 months, 0.85 against 10 sessions
20-day / 50-day average	**$4.88 / $5.52**	**Above the 20-day — the only name here that is**
RSI (14)	50.3	Dead neutral
MACD	**above signal**	**Positive momentum**
ADX / DI+ / DI−	21.0 / — / —	Weak trend; the market is undecided
Bollinger %B	**0.72**	**Upper part of the band — above the 0.70 "high" threshold**
Support / resistance	$4.30 / $5.60	Resistance 10% above
Implied volatility rank	47	Mid-range
Implied vs realised volatility	**73% vs 85%**	**IV is BELOW realised — options are cheap. See §6.2**

3 · Timing score: +2 of +3

TABLE 4 — TODAY'S SCORE

INPUT	EVIDENCE	SCORE
Price	**Bollinger %B 0.72, above the 0.70 threshold; $5.11 *above* the 20-day average of $4.88**	**+1**
Momentum	**MACD above its signal line; RSI 50.3 is neutral, so the majority reading is positive**	**+1**
Volume	30.4M traded. Relative volume 0.85 against 10 sessions — between the thresholds, so neutral. It was above 1.3 on three of the last four sessions.	0
Total — conditions favour selling covered calls		**+2**

WHAT A +2 ACTUALLY INSTRUCTS YOU TO DO

If you own 100 or more shares: this is the setup for selling a covered call. You get paid for agreeing to sell at a higher price, into strength, which is precisely when the premium is generous. See §6.3.

If you own no shares: the framework does not tell you to buy. It tells you that this is not your entry. Selling a put here means selling into a stock that has just run 15% on heavy volume, collecting compressed premium for it. Wait for the score to fall back to −2 — §6.4 sets out exactly where the puts would be when it does.

This is the discipline working. **A framework that says "buy" on every stock every day is not a framework, it is a sales pitch.**

4 · Quantant rating: SIDEWAYS

ACHR · Quant rating — SIDEWAYS

CURRENT REGIME	20-DAY RETURN	HISTORY AVAILABLE
Sideways	**+1.2%**	**753 sessions**

PROBABILITY	BEAR	SIDEWAYS	BULL
Tomorrow, given today is Sideways	24.1%	**53.3%**	**22.6%**
Long-run share of all days	47.4%	18.9%	33.7%

Persistence: Bear 90% · Sideways 53% · Bull 85%. The Sideways state is a genuine coin-flip — it resolves into a trend rather than lingering.

Walk-forward validation: 480 out-of-sample trades, Sharpe +0.62, maximum drawdown −61.1%. The best-validated signal in this series.

4.1 Reading the rating

- **The only non-Bear rating in six documents.** Every other company here is in a Bear regime with 84–93% persistence. Archer has climbed out.
- **Tomorrow is genuinely balanced:** 22.6% Bull against 24.1% Bear. After twelve pages of 90%-Bear readings elsewhere, that is a meaningful difference.

- **The signal has actually worked here.** Sharpe +0.62 across 480 out-of-sample trades — the strongest validation in the series, against −0.36 for Valens. When this model speaks about Archer, it has earned more of your attention.
- **But Sideways is unstable.** Only 53% persistence, versus 90% for Bear. This state resolves quickly, and the long-run distribution still says the stock spends 47.4% of its days in a Bear regime. A balanced coin is not the same as a favourable one.

FOR ONCE, THE TWO MODELS AGREE

The timing score says **+2 — sell calls, not puts**. The quant model says **Sideways, the least negative regime in the series, with the best track record**. In every other report these two conflicted and the answer was to reduce size. Here they point the same way: Archer is not a falling knife, it is a stock that has stabilised and popped. That is a covered-call setup, not a cash-secured-put setup.

5 · The case for and against

5.1 The bull case

A. THE ANDURIL PARTNERSHIP CHANGES THE STORY

The July 2026 unveiling of **Thunder** and **Halo** with **Anduril** — and **Marubeni Aerospace** as launch partner — moves Archer from a consumer air-taxi story to a defence-and-autonomy story. That matters for three reasons: military programmes avoid the civil passenger certification bottleneck; defence budgets are large and comparatively price insensitive; and Anduril choosing to partner is a technical endorsement from a company with no reason to be generous.

B. AN ENORMOUS CASH POSITION

$1.96 billion in cash and short-term investments against $121.9M of debt — roughly **$2.16 per share**, about **42% of the share price**. Even at a burn exceeding half a billion dollars a year, that is about three and a half years of runway. Archer is one of very few companies in this sector that can fund itself through certification without needing markets to cooperate.

C. ANALYST EXPECTATIONS ARE FAR ABOVE THE PRICE

Published Wall Street estimates imply roughly **94% upside** from current levels. Analysts are frequently wrong about timing — as Document 3 shows at length — but the direction of professional sentiment is a data point, and it is unusually wide here.

D. THE CHART HAS STABILISED

Alone among these six companies, Archer trades *above* its 20-day average, has a positive MACD, an RSI at a neutral 50, and a quant regime that is not Bear. The 19.6% move on 20 July came on 3.88× normal volume and has largely held. Whatever else is true, the relentless selling has stopped.

E. EXCEPTIONAL LIQUIDITY

A **one-cent** bid-ask spread on the stock and options with tens of thousands of contracts of open interest — 18,956 on a single August call strike. For anyone selling options, this is a completely different quality of market from the names in Documents 2 through 4, where a wide spread can cost more than the premium.

5.2 The bear case

A $3.9 BILLION COMPANY WITH $300,000 OF REVENUE

Archer sold **$0.3 million** of anything in FY2025. Against a $3.9 billion market capitalisation, that is not a valuation multiple in any meaningful sense — it is a bet on a product that is not yet commercially flying.

A. THE BURN IS ENORMOUS AND RISING

TABLE 5 — THE COST OF BUILDING AN AIRCRAFT

FINANCIAL YEAR	REVENUE	R&D	NET LOSS	FREE CASH FLOW	STOCK ISSUED
2023	$0.0M	$276.4M	−$457.9M	−$315.9M	$260.7M
2024	$0.0M	$357.7M	−$536.8M	−$450.6M	$783.4M
2025	$0.3M	**$493.9M**	**−$618.2M**	**−$537.9M**	**$1,858.1M**

Every line grows. Losses accumulate to **−$2.3 billion**. And the cash pile exists because the company issued **$1.86 billion of stock in 2025 alone** — the runway was bought from shareholders, and existing holders were diluted to fund it.

B. CERTIFICATION RISK IS UNRESOLVED AND OUTSIDE THE COMPANY'S CONTROL

Passenger eVTOL service requires regulators to certify a new class of aircraft with a new propulsion system for commercial carriage of people. That process has no precedent and no guaranteed timeline. The defence pivot reduces the dependence but does not remove it.

C. 16.4% OF THE FLOAT IS SHORT, AND BETA IS 3.19

108.5 million shares sold short. A beta above 3 means this typically moves three times as much as the broad market in both directions. The 52-week range of $4.30 to $14.62 tells the same story — it fell 65% from its high before the recent bounce.

D. THIS IS A COMPETITIVE FIELD WITH DEEP POCKETS

Joby, Beta, Lilium, Vertical, EHang and others are pursuing the same market, several with large manufacturing or airline partners. Being early is not the same as winning.

E. THE CATALYST JUST HAPPENED

The Anduril announcement is now public and the stock has already moved 15% on it. Buying after a catalyst has been announced and priced is precisely the behaviour the framework in Document 1 is designed to prevent.

5.3 Weighing it

Archer is the highest-quality *market* in this series — deepest liquidity, tightest spreads, best quant validation, real institutional attention — attached to one of the most speculative *businesses*: $300,000 of revenue, a $618 million annual loss, and a product awaiting regulatory approval.

The practical conclusion is unusual and worth stating plainly: **the trade to do here today is not the one this series is mostly about.** Conditions favour selling calls against shares you already own. For anyone starting from cash, the disciplined answer is to put it on the watchlist and wait for the score to turn negative again.

6 · Where the options are

6.1 A note on capital

At $5.11, one put contract at the $4.00 strike needs **$400** and at $4.50 needs **$450**. That is double the smallest names in this series, but well under Infleqtion's $750.

6.2 The volatility problem — and it is a real one

Archer's implied volatility is about **73%** while its realised volatility is **85%**. **Implied is BELOW realised.**

This is the opposite of every other company in this series, and it matters. As a seller of options you want implied volatility *above* realised — you want to be paid more than the stock actually moves. Here you would be paid *less*. The options are cheap relative to how much this stock genuinely swings around, which is excellent if you are buying them and unattractive if you are selling.

Combined with a +2 score, this is a second independent reason not to be selling puts on Archer today.

6.3 If you own shares: the covered calls

TABLE 6 — ACHR CALLS, 21 AUGUST 2026 (29 DAYS)

STRIKE	BID	ASK	IV	DELTA	PREMIUM PER CONTRACT	ANN. YIELD ON SHARES	OPEN INT.	COMMENT
$5.50	0.37	0.39	92%	0.44	$38	94%	1,549	Aggressive — 44% chance of being called away
$6.00	**0.22**	**0.26**	**92%**	**0.32**	**$24**	**59%**	**7,566**	**The balanced choice — 17% above spot**
$6.50	0.15	0.17	96%	0.23	$16	39%	753	Conservative
$7.00	0.10	0.11	98%	0.16	$11	26%	**18,956**	Very safe; deepest open interest on the board

If you own 100 shares · SELL 21 Aug 2026 $6.00 CALL · limit $0.26 GTC per contract

SHARES REQUIRED	PREMIUM IF FILLED	CALLED AWAY AT	DELTA / ANNUALISED
100	**$24**	**$6.00**	**0.32 / 59%**

Why this strike. $6.00 is **17% above** the current price and above the $5.60 resistance level, so you keep meaningful upside. Delta 0.32 means roughly a two-in-three chance the call expires worthless and you simply keep the $24. 7,566 contracts of open interest and a four-cent spread.

The two rules that apply. First, **only sell a call at a strike above what you paid for the shares** — otherwise you lock in a loss for a few dollars of premium. Second, earnings are expected **10 August**, inside this expiry; if you would rather not hold a short call through the report, use the 18 September $6.00 instead (bid $0.39, ask $0.43, 823 open interest).

What you give up. If the Anduril partnership produces a contract and the stock runs to $8, you sell at $6.00. That is the bargain: you traded the tail for the $24.

6.4 If you own nothing: where the puts would be, when the time comes

The framework says wait. But it is worth knowing in advance what you are waiting *for*, so you can act without hesitating. When the score returns to −2 — price back below the $4.88 average, RSI under 45, relative volume under 0.8 — these are the strikes to look at:

TABLE 7 — ACHR PUTS, FOR REFERENCE WHEN CONDITIONS TURN

EXPIRY	DAYS	STRIKE	BID	ASK	DELTA	BREAKEVEN	CASH NEEDED	ANN.	OPEN INT.
21 Aug	29	$4.00	0.08	0.12	−0.14	$3.90	$400	31%	**1,735**
21 Aug	29	$4.50	0.21	0.25	−0.26	$4.27	$450	64%	367
16 Oct	85	$4.00	0.26	0.31	−0.20	$3.71	$400	31%	**3,210**
16 Oct	85	$3.00	0.04	0.23	−0.09	$2.87	$300	19%	410

The **16 October $4.00 put** is the one to watch: 3,210 contracts of open interest, a $3.71 breakeven that is **14% below the 52-week low** and well beneath the $2.16 per share of net cash, for $400 of committed capital. If Archer gives back this month's gain on quiet volume, that is the setup.

6.5 What to avoid

- **The weekly expiries.** Archer lists options expiring in 1 day and 8 days. Document 1 §4.3 explains why these are a lottery with a fee attached. Ignore them.
- **The 4 September expiry.** Zero open interest and quotes like bid $0.01 / ask $2.63. Not a market.
- **Selling puts today.** Score +2 and implied volatility below realised. Two independent reasons to wait.

7 · What would change the thesis

TABLE 8 — TRIGGER LIST

WATCH FOR	INTERPRETATION
An actual defence contract with a dollar value attached, following the Anduril partnership	**Converts a partnership announcement into revenue. The single most important possible event.**
FAA certification milestones for Midnight	**The gate for the entire commercial business.**
Price falling back below $4.88 with relative volume under 0.8	**The score turns negative — this becomes a put-selling candidate. See §6.4.**
Burn rising above $600M a year, or another large equity raise	**Shortens a 3.5-year runway quickly and dilutes further.**
The 20 July gain being fully given back on heavy volume	**Would mean the Anduril news was sold, not bought.**
Certification timelines slipping again	**The recurring pattern in this sector.**
RSI above 60 with relative volume above 1.3	Score reaches +3 — the strongest covered-call conditions.

8 · Risks specific to this stock

$0.3 million of revenue against a $3.9 billion valuation. This is a bet on a product that is not yet commercially flying.

Over half a billion dollars a year of cash burn, and rising. The 3.5-year runway assumes the burn does not accelerate. It has accelerated every year so far.

Dilution. $1.86 billion of stock issued in 2025 alone.

Beta 3.19 and 16.4% of the float short. Expect violent moves in both directions.

Implied volatility is below realised. You are not being well paid to sell options here, which is unusual and worth respecting.

Regulatory approval is outside the company's control and has no precedent or guaranteed timeline.

If you remember nothing else from this report

Add it to your watchlist. Then, when price and daily volume are as low as they are right now, either sell a put or buy some shares.

These are good companies. There is no reason for this much selling other than **fear** — and fear is temporary. **Greed always prevails in the end.** Over time the market does one thing reliably: it distributes wealth **from the impatient to the patient.**

Be the patient one. That is the whole edge.

— the author. This is a personal conviction, not a forecast. Markets can and do stay irrational, and good companies can and do go to zero. Manage the risk, keep the positions small, and never let one trade end the experiment.

9 · Method, sources and disclaimer

METHOD

Price, volume, indicator, option chain and fundamental data were pulled from **Yahoo Finance** after the close on 23 July 2026. Financial statement figures come from filed accounts. Option implied volatilities were solved by bisection on Black-Scholes ($r = 4\%$, no dividend) from the quoted midpoint. Relative volume is reported against both 10-session and 3-month baselines. The quant rating in §4 comes from a Markov regime classifier using a 20-day rolling return with a ±5% threshold, a maximum-likelihood transition matrix, and a walk-forward backtest without lookahead.

SOURCES

- Yahoo Finance — quote, option chain, daily history, financial statements, short interest, beta.
- Company announcements via Yahoo Finance and Seeking Alpha — Thunder and Halo autonomous aircraft unveiled with Anduril; Marubeni Aerospace named launch partner (22–23 July 2026).
- Yahoo Finance — "Archer Aviation's Defense Push Gains Momentum" and "Archer Stock Climbs After Unveiling Next-Generation Autonomous Aircraft" (23 July 2026).
- Zacks / Yahoo — "Wall Street Analysts Predict a 93.63% Upside in Archer Aviation" (23 July 2026).
- Simply Wall St — "Archer Aviation Stock Looks Reasonable On Book Value But Weak On Broader Checks" (23 July 2026).

DISCLAIMER